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Atlantic Flyway Waterfowl Banding

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President's message

During the two weeks before and between the holidays your President has been preparing for bird banding in January by donning middle-weight boots, hefting a substantial pack containing everything needed for survival during 3 weeks in the wilderness and doing a series of 3-mile forced marches on the steepest hills of Hopewell. Preparing for bird banding?! It's called the Tropical Ecology Field Course, an ultimate of expanded bird banding involvements, other examples of which were discussed in the last issue. Yours truly gets to go to the tropics as a volunteer assistant by being indispensable, this being the fifth time.

The intensive 3½-week graduate field course is aimed at the total picture in the localities that are chosen for study. The habitat is characterized (guidebooks do not exist yet for much of what is seen) and the ecology, behavior, and distribution of living creatures are observed. Of prime interest are the migratory passerines that are back home in the tropics for the winter and how they, as singles, fit in with the local residents, about 60% of whom are permanently pair-bonded and defend

permanent territories. Of prime concern are the habitat needs of these migrants and the effects of the vanishing wilderness on their numbers. Bird censuses are made both by mist netting and observations of the fast-moving foraging flocks. Habitat studies include thornscrub (hot), rainforest (steamy), tropical deciduous forest (dry), tropical evergreen forest (moist), cloud forest (dripping), and mixed pine-hardwood forest at various elevations (can be cold).

Access to these sites varies from excellent paved roads, rutted dirt roads, streams forded by indestructable Volkswagen vans, grass air strips and small planes, open oceans and small boats, and trails with pack mules and backpacks.

Fun? You bet! Difficult? Often! Risky? Calculated. Comfortable? Not always. Scary? Sometimes. Fascinating? Perpetually.

Here's to bird banding!

Hannah Suthers

Atlantic Flyway waterfowl banding

Fred Hartman

In NABB 7:4(152-153) we presented a summary of the Atlantic Flyway waterfowl banding efforts for the 1981 pre- and post-hunting seasons. Data are presented here of duck and Canada Goose bandings during the preseason 1982 in Eastern Canada and Atlantic Flyway states. No brant or greater Snow Geese were banded in the summer of 1982 in the Special Brant Banding Project.

Summary

More ducks and fewer Canada Geese were banded in eastern Canada in preseason 1982 than in 1981. For ducks, 73% (+7948) more were banded. A total of 18,843 ducks were banded. Provincial totals are shown in Table 1.

In 1982 fifteen Atlantic Flyway states conducted preseason banding operations. Totals of 15,220 ducks and 3457 Canada Geese were banded. These figures represent a 30% decrease in duck bandings (-6476) and a 30% decrease in goose bandings (-1482). State banding totals are shown in Table 2.

Since 1965, totals of 291,835 ducks and 48,304 Canada Geese have been banded in eastern Canada. During the same period, 273,716 ducks and 35,072 Canada Geese have been banded in the Atlantic Flyway states.

Objectives: (1) To determine distribution of harvest from breeding and wintering areas, and to define breeding area source of harvest based on band recovery information. (2) To

Table 1

Province	All Ducks	American Black Ducks
Prince Edward Island	6	6
New Brunswick	3499	1527
Ontario	3004	342
Quebec	10,828	2603
Nova Scotia	359	139
Newfoundland-Labrador	1147	429

Table 2

State	Ducks	Canada Geese
Maine	2370	378
Vermont	1579	115
Massachusetts	1058	
Connecticut	8	
New York	4365	929
Pennsylvania	1019	380
New Jersey	645	877
Delaware	405	
Maryland	1456	
West Virginia	59	37
Virginia	168	80
North Carolina	773	
South Carolina	472	661
Georgia	772	
Florida	150	

determine changes in harvest pressure on various populations of waterfowl as measured by recovery and/or harvest rates. (3) To determine annual and/or long-term survival rates for important breeding and wintering populations of waterfowl.

Findings

At least 18,843 ducks and 126 Canada Geese were banded pre-season 1982 in eastern Canada (Tables 1 and 3). The number of ducks banded was 7948 more than in 1981. The total numbers of each species banded are shown in Table 3. All major species had an increase in numbers banded in 1982 compared with 1981: American Black Duck +64% (1963); Mallard +40% (1757); American Black Duck x Mallard +196% (159); Wood Duck +275% (897); Blue-winged Teal +104% (1495); Green-winged Teal +130% (1289); Northern Pintail +53% (103); American Wigeon +25% (39); and Ring-necked Duck +15% (23).

In Atlantic Flyway states, known totals of 15,220 ducks and 3457 Canada Geese were banded pre-season 1982 (Tables 1, 2, and 3). These figures represent a decrease of 6476 ducks and 1482 geese from 1981 pre-season bandings. 1982 compared to 1981: Mallard -67% (7499); Mallard x American Black Duck -56% (57); Green-winged Teal -38% (89); and Northern Pintail -34% (40). The large decrease in Mallards banded was probably because the usual large numbers of them were not banded at 2 major stations. More of these species were banded in pre-season 1982 than the previous pre-season: American Black Duck +24% (463); Wood Duck +7% (432); and Blue-winged Teal +36% (421). Eider bandings were similar to 1981.

Approximately 24 banding stations were operational during the 1982 Cooperative Banding Program in eastern Canada. The approximate number of stations were: Ontario 8, Quebec 5, Nova Scotia at least 1, Prince Edward Island 1, Newfoundland 3, and New Brunswick 6.

American Black Duck banding activity was intensified in

**Table 3. 1982 Pre-season banding totals by species.
1 July to 1 November 1982**

Species	Number of waterfowl banded		
	Canada	United States	Total
Canada Goose	126	3457	3583
Mallard	6158	3631	9789
American Black Duck	5046	2399	7445
Black Duck x Mallard	240	44	284
Gadwall	17	2	19
Northern Pintail	298	77	375
Green-winged Teal	2278	144	2422
Blue-winged Teal	2928	1586	4514
American Wigeon	193	7	200
American Wigeon x Mallard	0	1	1
Northern Shoveler	20	1	21
Wood Duck	1223	6652	7875
Redhead	3	0	3
Ring-necked Duck	174	44	218
Common Goldeneye	11	27	38
Barrow's Goldeneye	8	0	8
Common Eider	210	426	636
Ruddy Duck	3	0	3
Hooded Merganser	2	75	77
Common Merganser	1	0	1
Mottled Duck	0	183	183
Lesser Scaup	1	0	1
Pied-billed Grebe	29	0	29
Totals	18,969	18,756	37,725

Newfoundland. Surveys were conducted in Quebec to locate new American Black Duck banding sites. Pre-season banding was also conducted in the Atlantic Flyway states under quotas established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Service distributed the new quotas in 1980.

The Wildlife Management Institute continued to provide administrative assistance in collecting Cooperative State Funds and distributing these funds through grants-in-aid and direct payments of bills approved by the Banding Committee.

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Joint E.B.B.A. and N.E.B.A. 1985 Meeting

The Eastern and Northeastern Bird Banding Associations announce that they will hold a joint meeting 26 April through 28 April 1985 at the National 4-H Center in Washington, D.C. The meeting will be hosted jointly by the Mid-Atlantic Bird Banding Group and the Maryland Ornithological Society.

Accommodations will be available at the 4-H Center at an approximate cost of between \$42 and \$127 for the two-night stay, including meals. Commuter price will be approximately \$26, including Saturday lunch and the banquet.

One of the highlights of the meeting will be the opportunity to tour the Bird Banding Laboratory and Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. Field trips to some of the Mid-Atlantic region's best birding spots will be scheduled for Sunday.

Those interested in presenting papers or displaying posters should contact Dr. John S. Weske, Box 116, Sandy Spring, MD 20860 (301-774-7564). Anyone willing to give a workshop should contact Joe Schreiber, 2910 Hilcrest Ave., Baltimore, MD 21234 (301-661-8340) or Barbara Ross, 308 Thornhill Rd., Baltimore, MD 21212 (301-435-7166). Please provide a brief description of your topic and a biographical sketch.

Registration forms will be mailed to E.B.B.A. and N.E.B.A. members in late February 1985. However, other banders who plan to be in the Washington area during the meetings and who would like to take advantage of these attractive rates and spend extra time in Washington should contact M. Kathleen Klimkiewicz, Biologist, Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel, MD 20707 (301-498-0423).