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Comments On "A Summary of Black-Capped Chickadee Recoveries During Spring Migration"

Brooks (*N. Am. Bird Bander* 12:19-20, 1987) published a list of 13 recoveries of Black-capped Chickadees (*Parus atricapillus*) banded during the season for spring migration and recovered in different 10-minute blocks during the same season and years. Some important implications not mentioned by Brooks are contained in her data.

She reported two Black-capped Chickadees banded at the same place in Ontario on 28 April 1962 and re-encountered on 11 and 18 May 1962 at a location 131 miles (211 km) ENE from their northward flights together. Little is known about the extent of association of individual passerine birds in their migratory movements, and this information is needed for improved understanding of the development and operation of migratory behavior.

Although all of the 13 birds were banded during the season for northward migration, two traveled in southerly directions. One bird banded in Connecticut on 12 March 1961 traveled 25 miles (40 km) SSW to be re-encountered on 29 March 1961. Another, banded in Michigan on 2 May 1982, traveled 32 miles (52 km) SE to be re-encountered on 30 May 1982. Is there a spring shuffle of the Black-capped Chickadee population in which the birds may move short distances in any direction? Might these have been birds experiencing

nesting failures and later traveling short distances? Or might reporting errors be involved? Certainly the indicated northward movement of Black-capped Chickadees during the spring presents an anomaly worthy of comment.

Based on these records presented by Brooks, northward migration of Black-capped Chickadees is shown to occur chiefly during late March or the first half of April. Thus, a bird banded in New Jersey on 25 March 1952 was recovered 44 miles (71 km) NE from the banding place on 12 April 1952; a bird banded in Connecticut on 20 March 1962 was recovered 105 miles (169 km) NNE on 5 April 1962; and a bird banded in Connecticut on 7 April 1969 was recovered 154 miles (248 km) NE on 17 April 1969. A bird banded in Ontario on 28 April 1962 and recovered 131 miles (211 km) ENE on 11 May 1962 shows northward movement until late April or early May. The later movement of the more northern Ontario bird suggests leisurely northward movement. Similarly, leisurely movement is also suggested by the average of 7.6 miles (12.3 km) traveled per day by these four birds.

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