North American Bird Bander

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Western Regional News

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Shieldcastle offered a thank-you for their service to Tom Kashmer and Keith Kimmerle whose terms expired.

Future meeting locations. The 2002 meeting has been set for 20 - 22 September in Harlingen, Texas, at the Arroyo Colorado Wildlife Area. Brent Ortego will act as host. There will be forthcoming announcements in *NABB* of meeting themes and content. It was proposed that the 2003 meeting be held in Illinois and the 2004 meeting be held in Oklahoma.

Members in attendance: Darleen Ayres (IA), Tom Bartlett (OH), David Cimprich (TX), Heidi denHaan (MB), Joe Gartner (MN), Betty Grenon (NE), Morelle Herzinger (NE), Sandra Herzinger (NE), Nelson Hoskins (IA), Cathie Hutchinson (IL), Jim Ingold (LA), Tom Kashmer (OH), Keith Kimmerle (MS), Vernon Kleen (IL), Mark Shieldcastle (OH), Julie West (OH).

Abstracts from the IBBA 2000 meeting will be published in the next issue of *NABB*.

Western Regional News

Founded in 1925

Western Bird Banding Association
76th Annual Meeting
21-23 September 2001, Spokane, WA

Following tradition, Friday field trips again opened WBBA's annual meeting. This year we went to Turnbull NWR and to other areas in northeastern Washington. Good weather and a nice selection of species combined to make a successful day of birding. The Finch Arboretum, adjacent to the conference hotel, provided opportunities for shorter birding forays.

Friday afternoon's workshops in Band Manager and MapsProg were held in a computer lab at Spokane Falls Community College. Participants received instruction and had ample opportunity for hands-on practice. WBBA's Board of Directors also met that afternoon. The Friday evening barbeque had diners debating about whether the salmon, steak, or portabellos were the best - all were first rate! After dinner we heard a little about Turnbull NWR from Refuge Manager ***Nancy Curry***, then had a fascinating talk about geology by ***Andy Buddington***, Spokane Community College: "The Great Missoula Floods, the Formation of the Geologic Channelized Scab Lands."

The flight home Sunday gave some of us an opportunity to see and more fully appreciate some of the landscape characteristics described on Friday.

With only a few birds netted, Saturday's banding at Little Spokane Natural Area provided little opportunity for actual banding practice. The time was productively used by C. J. Ralph to present his "Tabular Pyle" where ageing and sexing criteria from Pyle's ID Guide are formatted to facilitate ease and speed of use. A demonstration of the "body pluck" method of extracting birds from nets was presented in verbal form, due to lack of birds.

Saturday morning papers (abstracts below) focused on migration monitoring and were followed by a Migration Roundtable with participants from several bird observatories discussing the need for monitoring birds during migration.

The luncheon keynote address was presented by ***Rex Sallabanks***, Sustainable Systems Institute, on *"The Role of Fire in Shaping the Composition of Western Forest Bird Communities."*

Afternoon papers (abstracts below) were followed by a short WBBA business meeting in which VP Ken Burton advised members of WBBA's financial status (solvent) and membership status (shrinking), congratulated successful candidates for NABC Bander and Trainer certification, invited applications for research grants, requested proposals for locations for next year's WBBA meeting, and presented the slate for the Board of Directors. Officers for the coming year, as approved by the WBBA membership are:

President (2002)	Jim Steele
1st Vice-President (2002)	Ken Burton
2nd Vice-President (2002)	Rhonda Millikin
Secretary (2002)	Stephanie Jones
Treasurer (no term)	Tricia Campbell
Director (2003)	Gary Blevins
Director (2002)	Anna-Marie Benson
Regional Director -Intermountain West	Ken Voget
Past President (ex officio)	Bob Altman
Editor (ex officio)	Kay Loughman

Saturday evening's speaker was ***J. Michael Scott***, U.S. Geological Survey, who spoke on *"Conservation of America's Bio-Diversity: Filling the Gaps."*

Sunday brought more banding, this time at Turnbull NWR. At least 20 birds, representing several species, were captured and banded.

Throughout, the meeting organization showed evidence of thoughtful planning and hard work. Gary Blevins and his crew of volunteers are to be congratulated for a job very well done.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

COMPREHENSIVE BIRD MONITORING IN THE KLAMATH/SISKIYOU REGION. ***John D. Alexander***, Klamath Bird Observatory, P. O. Box 758, Ashland, OR 97520, jda@klamathbird.org. ***C. John Ralph***, U.S. Forest Service, Redwood Sciences Laboratory, P.O. Box 5071, Arcata, CA 95518, cjralph@humboldtl.com.

ABSTRACT: The Klamath Bird Observatory and the Klamath Demographic Monitoring Network have compiled data from over 45 constant-effort mist netting stations throughout the Klamath/Siskiyou Region of southern Oregon and northern California. We will present results from various analyses to demonstrate the applicability of monitoring network data with regards to conservation and land management. Productivity indices from various stations are used to test hypotheses and support conservation strategies associated with Partners In Flight riparian focal species. Data collected with mist nets are compared with those collected using point counts to support the use of various monitoring methods to develop a comprehensive monitoring network.

Data collected at mist netting stations during the breeding season are compared with data collected during dispersal and migration seasons to demonstrate the importance of monitoring birds during spring, summer and fall.

MIGRATION MONITORING IN ALASKA: PERSPECTIVES FROM HIGH-LATITUDE SITES. ***Anna-Marie Benson*** and ***David Shaw***, Alaska Bird Observatory, P. O. Box 80505, Fairbanks, AK 99708, ambenson@alaskabird.org. In the absence of the authors, this paper was presented by Jacqueline Weicker of the Alaska Bird Observatory.

ABSTRACT: Sampling migrant passage at the northern limit of a species' range during autumn provides insight into the life histories of birds before the initiation of long-distance migration. The close proximity of Alaska stations to the probable breeding grounds of the birds sampled reduces the likelihood of capturing individuals from different breeding populations. This contrasts with stations at lower latitudes that likely are visited by migrants from several different breeding populations of unknown origin. Data from stations in Alaska may therefore provide a good example of how information on the passage of migrant birds can be utilized to monitor trends in population size. We describe the size and geographic location of migration-monitoring stations throughout Alaska in reference to their contribution to Alaska and North American conservation goals. We also provide an overview of the future objectives of migration-monitoring programs in Alaska.

THE WEST NILE VIRUS – WHAT BANDERS SHOULD KNOW. ***Gary Brady***, Spokane Falls Community College, 3410 Ft. Geo. Wright Drive, Spokane, WA 99224, ccllamas@spocom.com.

ABSTRACT: The West Nile Virus is a flavivirus commonly found in Africa, West Asia, and the Middle East. Discovered in Uganda in 1937, the West Nile Virus first appeared in the Western

hemisphere (Northeast United States) in August 1999, resulting in 62 cases of severe meningoencephalitis and 7 deaths in New York state. The virus is transmitted by five genera of mosquitoes, (primarily *Culex* species), that become infected when feeding on birds which harbor the virus in their blood. More than 70 species of birds have been identified as reservoir hosts for the West Nile Virus.The virus is transmitted only through the bite of mosquito vectors, with no documented cases of person-to-person or bird-to-person transmission. In the U.S., morbidity/mortality data in 2000 documents 21 reported cases with 2 deaths, and to September, 2001, 8 cases of severe West Nile encephalitis have been reported, with 1 death. There is no vaccine or specific therapy for West Nile encephalitis. Geographic distribution data indicates the virus is spreading in the U.S.: the virus was reported in 6 northeastern states in 1999, 12 states in 2000, and 22 states in 2001. Currently, the virus has spread as far south as Florida and as far west as Wisconsin. The fact that geographic distribution is increasing while morbidity/mortality is decreasing suggests that surveillance, prevention, and control measures implemented by the Centers for Disease Control in the U.S. have been effective.

FALL MIGRATION OF NEOTROPICAL MIGRANTS IN SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO. ***Jay Carlisle***, University of South Dakota & Idaho Bird Observatory, 1413 Rand, Boise, ID 83709, jcarlisl@usd.edu.

ABSTRACT: The Idaho Bird Observatory has operated a fall migration banding station in the Boise Foothills at Lucky Peak, Ada, CO,since 1997. This effort has yielded high annual capture numbers for many Neotropical migrant passerines allowing for examination of migration timing, intraspecific differential migration patterns, and assessment of migratory condition. One highlight of this research is the documentation of early fall migration among several Neotropical migrants. For several species, particularly adults of Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Warbling Vireo, fall migration is under way by the last two weeks of July. This has been documented by both examination of fat stores on captured birds and the use of ceilometry to view nocturnally migrating birds. Many Neotropical migrants exhibit differential timing of migration among age classes. However, there is no universal pattern. While adults of many species depart earlier than young birds in fall, the reverse is true for some other species, particularly warblers. As expected, there is a general trend towards adults being in better migratory condition (i.e., carrying more fat) but the differences are not great.

COMPARISON OF TWO RIPARIAN AVIAN POPULATIONS: SOURCE OR SINK? ***Mike Cliff***, Western Wash. U., Colville Natl. Forest, 13219 E. Heroy, Spokane, WA 99216, mcliffus@ yahoo.com.

ABSTRACT: From 1997-2000 we examined annual variations in population of migratory song birds at two sites in eastern Washington State. We conducted this evaluation by using constant-effort mist netting techniques and incorporating MAPS protocol. Both sites were located along ecotones where moist coniferous forest joined with riparian habitats. At both sites, we found a high capture percentage of three specific species. These three species included two long-distance migrants (MacGillivray's Warbler and Swainson's Thrush) and one short-distance migrant (Song Sparrow). We examined population dynamics of the three species by looking at productivity, survivorship, and recruitment. We found that productivity was low for the two long-distance migrants at both sites, but higher for the short-distance migrating species. We also found that survivorship and recruitment were low for all three species at both sites.

We conclude that for both sites there were high populations of the three species. However, these populations were not sustainable and had to replenish their numbers by emigration from other areas. As a result, both sites function as sinks rather than sources for populations of the three species.

THE BREEDING FOX SPARROWS OF THE NORTHERN CASCADES OF OREGON. ***Steve Dowlan***, Editor "Oregon Birds", Bureau of Land Management, P. O. Box 220, Mehama, OR 97384, owl hooter@ aol.com.

ABSTRACT: Fox Sparrows (*Passerella iliaca*) are apparently recent pioneers in the western Cascades of northern Oregon. The taxonomy of this species represents "one of the biggest unsolved species problems in North American ornithology..", according to Robert Zink of the Bell Museum of Natural History, St. Paul, MN. Though at present only a single species is recognized by the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU), the breeding forms of *Passerella iliaca* in Oregon, are represented by 2 to 3 races, or possibly 2 distinct

species under taxonomic revisions which have been investigated and proposed by Zink. In order to assist in the clarification of Fox Sparrow taxonomy in the "new" portion of the range, I utilized a parabolic microphone to record Fox Sparrow songs in the area. These recordings were used to lure individual territorial males into mist nets in order to collect morphometric data, specifically, bill dimensions. I also collected data from breeding Fox Sparrows elsewhere in Oregon, including the Warner Mountains, Steens Mountain and the Trout Creek Mountains, for comparison. The data I collected indicate that Fox Sparrows in the Northern Cascades probably originated from the large-billed *megarhyncha* group of southern Oregon rather than from Blue Mountains and Basin and Range populations as has been speculated in Oregon ornithological literature.

EIGHT MILES FROM DOWNTOWN – URBAN 'MAPPING'. ***Howard Ferguson***, Washington Dept. of Wildlife, 8702 N. Division St., Spokane, WA 99218.

SUMMARY: The Little Spokane MAPS station has now been run for six years. This talk will summarize the results from this six-year effort in this near urban riparian setting—only eight miles from downtown Spokane. This station has been very prolific and the results have helped to protect riparian developments in the Spokane area.

PUT YOUR MAPS IN YOUR PALM. ***Howard Ferguson***, Washington Dept. of Wildlife, 8702 N. Division St., Spokane, WA 99218.

SUMMARY: This will be a quick demonstration on the use of the Palm for the collection of data at our Spokane MAPS station. What will be shown are actual screen projections from the handheld computer and discussion and presentation on how the tool was developed using a "green share" program called CyberTracker.

FALL MIGRATION MONITORING IN RIPARIAN HABITATS OF CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL VALLEY. ***Diana L. Humple*** and ***Geoffrey R. Geupel***, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970, dianahumple@prbo.org.

ABSTRACT. Much of California's Central Valley has been developed or converted into agriculture, and less than 5% of original riparian and wetland habitat remains. We monitored fall landbird migration in remnant riparian habitat along the Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Cosumnes rivers using mist netting and area search censuses between 1995 and 1999. We detected a total of 125 species using these riparian sites, 73 of which we captured in mist nets. Comparing the two census methods, we found that six passerine species were captured in mist nets that were not detected on area searches, and 22 passerine species were detected on area search censuses but were not captured in mist-nets. We found relatively high use of these sites by both adult and young birds, with overall age ratios in each region ranging from 2 to 4 young for every adult captured. Capture rates were approximately twice as high along the Cosumnes River at 74.4 birds per 100 net hours than the other two regions, where capture rates were 39.6 and 32.0 (Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, respectively). The capture rate of Neotropical migrants was highest along the Sacramento River, where 18 species were caught. Capture rates on the Cosumnes River were highest for year-round resident species and on the San Joaquin River for wintering species. The use of these remnant riparian sites by numerous species, many of current conservation interest in California, suggests the importance of this habitat to landbirds in the West during the autumn.

POPULATION DYNAMICS OF LANDBIRDS IN DENALI NATIONAL PARK, AK, AND IN FORT HOOD,TX. ***Danielle O'Grady***, The Institute for Bird Populations, P. O. Box 1346, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956, dogrady@birdpop.org

SUMMARY: We monitored the vital rates and population trends of landbirds during 1992-2000 using four MAPS stations in Denali NP, AK, and during 1994-2000 using six MAPS stations in Fort Hood, TX. Overall, population sizes were fairly stable at both locations, with non-significant annual decreases for all species pooled, with slightly more decreasing than increasing target species. At each location, annual changes in population size for each target species and all species pooled were positively correlated with annual changes in productivity the year before. Despite the fact that annual changes in population size were driven primarily by annual changes in productivity, overall population trends for both decreasing and increasing species at both locations were driven by low or high adult survivorship nearly as often as by low or high productivity.

NEST-SITE SELECTION AND NEST SUCCESS OF MOUNTAIN CHICKADEES. ***Mark D. Reynolds***, The Nature Conservancy, P. O. Box 311, Truckee, CA 96160, mreynolds@tnc.org.
Michelle A. Johnson, Holy Names College, madge5it@excite.com.

ABSTRACT: I examined characteristics of nest boxes, nest substrates, and habitats surrounding nest boxes of Mountain Chickadees (*Poecile gambeli*) at the Sagehen Creek Field Station near Truckee, CA. Nesting productivity and selection were estimated for 1993-1996 and 1998. Nest box and habitat variables were treated as discrete or continuous for separate analyses. I correlated discrete variables with nest boxes where nesting was attempted or not attempted, and between successful or unsuccessful nests using X^2 tests of independence. I correlated continuous variables with measures of nest box selection (proportion of the five breeding seasons that nests were built per box) and productivity (proportion of attempted nests that successfully fledged ≥ one young) using step-wise regression. Nest box selection was correlated negatively with cavity entrance diameter, and positively correlated with total herb cover and canopy cover above the eastern quarter of the nest box ($r^2 = 0.19$, $P = 0.0001$). Additionally, nest box selection occurred more in woodcrete boxes ($X^2 = 11.57$, $P = 0.0007$), and where lodgepole pines were the tallest trees ($X^2 = 7.46$, $P = 0.02$) and largest dbh class ($X^2 = 12.43$, $P = 0.006$). Nest success was correlated negatively with cavity entrance diameter ($r^2 = 0.08$, $P = 0.012$), and was greater in plots with short lodgepole pine trees ($X^2 = 9.8$, $P = 0.02$). Greater herb cover and lodgepole pine trees of heterogeneous heights seem to provide good resources of cavities for protection, nesting material, foraging opportunities, and early morning sunlight absorption, resulting in increased nesting productivity.

NINE YEARS OF BANDING AT DOUGLAS CREEK (MAPS Site #117), DOUGLAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON, ***Dan Stephens***, Wenatchee Valley College and Bureau of Land Management, 1300 Fifth St.,Wenatchee, WA. 98801. dstephens@wvcmaii.ctc.edu.

SUMMARY: MAPS banding started in Douglas Creek Canyon in May 1993. The Douglas Creek/ Duffy Creek complex is Bureau of Land Management property in central Washington. The area is about 12,000 acres of which about 2,000 acres is a cattle exclosure. The exclosure has been in effect since about 1980 and encompasses about five miles of the main canyon, including the riparian area. The banding station is in the riparian area, dominated by Black Cottonwood, Water Birch, willow species, currant, and chokecherry. The canyon is a well-known migratory corridor and is rich in breeding species. Sixty-five species have been banded during MAPS banding in nine years. One-hundred and one species have been recorded on the site in the last 20 years. The ten most common species banded during MAPS banding in order of abundance are: Lazuli Bunting, Bullock's Oriole, Yellow-breasted Chat, Spotted Towhee, Black-headed Grosbeak, Warbling Vireo, American Goldfinch, Song Sparrow, Western Wood-Pewee, and American Robin. Ageing and sexing of these species was discussed with pictures, especially the importance of contrast between primary coverts and greater coverts.

SEXING WILSON'S WARBLERS: LOOKING BEYOND THE CAP. ***Jacqueline Weicker***, Alaska Bird Observatory, P. O. Box 80505, Fairbanks, AK 99708, jackiew@alaskabird.org. ***Kevin Winker***, University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, AK.

ABSTRACT: Using museum specimens from Mexico, Canada, and the western United States, we examined sexual dimorphism in Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*), a Nearctic-Neotropic migrant (Passeriformes: Parulidae). On average, males had longer tails, wing chords, and eighth and ninth primaries than females. Three methods for quantifying cap plumage showed that differences in cap size and pattern alone could not definitively separate the sexes. Discriminate functions are presented for sexing individuals using cap category, cap length, wing chord, tail length, and ninth primary length. More specific functions are provided for samples from Alaska and eastern Mexico. For each group, equations are included for assigning individual probabilities of belonging to either sex.

Mountain Chickadee by George West