

2006

2006 Annual Meeting Abstracts

North American Bird Bander

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2006 ANNUAL MEETING ABSTRACTS

WORKSHOP ABSTRACTS

BYSTRAK, DANNY. **BANDIT, THE BIRD BANDING LAB'S LATEST TOOL FOR MANAGING BANDING DATA.** USGS

Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Bird Banding Laboratory, 12100 Beech Forest Road, Laurel, MD 20708-4037. Corresponding Workshop Coordinator - dbysttrak@usgs.gov

Due to popular demand from the banders, we are working on a replacement for the BandManager program. This new product, called "Bandit," is a more user-friendly application which we hope will address most of the problems that have come up over the years. BandManager users should feel comfortable with Bandit, and all should find that it lacks the steep learning curve of its predecessor. The name Bandit was chosen from names recommended by banders. This workshop will include a demonstration of the current (pre-release) version, and will, we hope, invite constructive criticism.

LARSON, KEITH and IAN AUSPREY. **INTERPRETING MOLT, MOLT LIMITS, AND PLUMAGES TO AGE LANDBIRDS.** Klamath Bird Observatory, PO Box 758, Ashland, OR 97520. Corresponding Workshop Coordinator - kwl@KlamathBird.org

Molts and plumages of birds have been studied by biologists for over 100 years. It was not until Pyle (1997) published the *Identification Guide to North American Birds*, Part 1, that banders had the opportunity to compare birds in the hand with a concise guide to the molts and plumages of these birds. A key element of this book was the recognition of partial and incomplete molts in the majority of hatch-year/second-year non-passerines and passerines. These molts left birds with a distinctive "molt limit" between replaced first basic feathers and retained juvenal feathers. In this workshop we will focus on understanding the differences inherent in each generation of feathers and the temporal effects of factors that degrade

these feathers. Recognition of these factors, the quality and appearance of the feather generations, is central to understanding how to interpret the molt and plumages of birds in the hand and subsequently ageing them with the greatest degree of precision possible throughout the year.

RALPH, C. JOHN¹, KEITH LARSON² and WADE LEITNER³. **VISUALIZING YOUR BANDING DATA WITH LaMMNA.** ¹U.S. Forest

Service, Redwood Sciences Laboratory, 1700 Bayview Drive, Arcata, California 95521.

²Klamath Bird Observatory, PO Box 758, Ashland, OR 97520. ³1805 S Ceylon, Tucson, AZ 85748 ¹Corresponding workshop coordinator cjralph@humboldt1.com

This workshop is being organized to help design visualizations of banding data. With some new funding, we will be able to present some ways to help banders who contribute their data to a network like the Landbird Migration Monitoring Network of the Americas (LaMMNA) or MAPS to actually see their own data, and to compare and contrast with other, nearby stations. The leaders of this session are involved with MAPS, eBird, PRBO, Klamath Bird Observatory, and others, and all have put together some really good applications involving data entry, displays of data, etc., incorporating perhaps some BandManager coding, some MAPSPROG, and ageing and sexing information. A report will be made of the outcome of this during the regular meeting on Saturday.

PAPER SESSION ABSTRACTS

ALEXANDER, JOHN D.¹, DAN C. BARTON² and NATHANIEL E. SEAVY.¹ **LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRENDS IN BREEDING AND MIGRATORY BIRD POPULATIONS IN THE KLAMATH AND ROGUE RIVER VALLEYS: MONITORING RESULTS FOR 1993-2003.**

¹Klamath Bird Observatory, PO Box 758, Ashland, OR 97520. ²University of Montana, Organismal Biology and Ecology Program & Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, 205 Natural Science, Missoula, MT 59812. Corresponding author - jda@KlamathBird.org

We monitored bird populations from 1993-2003 using mist nets at two riparian banding stations—one on the Klamath River in northern California and the other on the Rogue River of southern Oregon. We used these data to investigate population trends of 31 species of breeding and fall migrant birds and compared these population trends with those from the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) Southern Pacific Rainforest Physiographic Region for the same time period. Qualitatively, the BBS and mist-netting trends corresponded well; the direction of most trends was consistent across the different data sets. However, when compared quantitatively with Spearman rank correlations, we found that the relationship between mist-netting trends and BBS trends was generally weak. We also found little correspondence between trends at the Rogue River site and Klamath River site during the breeding season, suggesting that different population-level processes may be occurring at each site. Comparing local trends to larger-scale BBS results provides information about local and regional population trends and adds to the increasing evidence that regional population declines are occurring in songbirds.

AUSPREY, IAN and JOHN D. ALEXANDER. **STOPOVER ECOLOGY OF GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROWS IN THE KLAMATH BIOREGION.** Klamath Bird Observatory, PO Box 758, Ashland, OR 97520. Corresponding author - iausprey@yahoo.com

Daily change in energetic condition was estimated for Golden-crowned Sparrows over 10 years at two constant-effort mist netting stations within the Klamath Bioregion in southern Oregon and northern California. All newly captured individuals at the Rogue River site demonstrated significant daily increases in condition while results for individuals at the Upper Klamath Lake site suggested a positive yet non-significant trend. Age response varied as well. Only hatch-year birds at Rogue River showed a significant increase in condition while only after-hatch-year individuals' condition at Upper Klamath Lake site significantly increased. Calculation of minimum stopover duration based on recaptures varied. Stopover duration at Upper Klamath Lake site ranged between 2 and 14 days (N = 8) and at Rogue River

between 2 and 42 days (N = 89). The durations at Rogue River are extreme in relation to stopover records for other *Zonotrichia* sparrows and suggest that many recaptures from that site are wintering individuals rather than passing migrants.

BURTON, KENNETH M. **A BANDER'S OVERVIEW OF MOLT AND PLUMAGE CYCLES AND STRATEGIES: UNDERSTANDING RECENT MODIFICATIONS TO THE HUMPHREY-PARKES TERMINOLOGY.** 1207 Gassoway Rd., McKinleyville CA 95519. Corresponding author - brdnrd@sbcglobal.net

Most standard banding references in use today in North America utilize terminology introduced by Humphrey and Parkes nearly 50 years ago. Howell et al. recently proposed modifications to this terminology that better reflect molt homologies and make understanding molt strategies easier. These modifications are gaining acceptance rapidly within the ornithological community, but the references remain unchanged. I will explain the differences between the two terminologies, discuss the four underlying molt strategies defined by Howell et al., and illustrate each strategy with schematic diagrams showing the first several calendar years in the lives of representative species.

BYSTRAK, DANNY. **BIRD BANDING LABORATORY UPDATE.** USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Bird Banding Laboratory, 12100 Beech Forest Road, Laurel, MD 20708-4037. Corresponding author - dbystrak@usgs.gov

Many changes have happened in the Bird Banding Lab since the last WBBA meeting, and more are in the offing. We have entered a new era in data management with our "Oracle" system and are on the verge of releasing an improved data management and submission program for banders. We are also working on updated Western Hemisphere partnerships, particularly with Mexico. We are going to be starting a campaign to increase use of the web reporting page on our web site, including addition of a web address to the bands.

CHURCHWELL, ROY T. and GINA BARTON.
**PREDATION OF MIST NET BIRDS BY
SCAVENGERS AND INVESTIGATION OF A
SOLUTION.** San Francisco Bay Bird
Observatory, P.O. Box 247, Alviso, CA 95002.
Corresp. author - rchurchwell@sfbbo.org.

Predation of birds in mist nets can become a problem during banding efforts, especially at long-term, year-round, banding stations. The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory started patrolling net lanes between net runs to deter gray fox and house cats from taking birds captured in the nets. We compared two years of capture data pre-predator patrol with two years of data during predator patrol to investigate the effect of an increased human presence on the capture rates at the banding station. We used four resident species: Bushtit, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Common Yellowthroat, and Song Sparrow because resident species would better demonstrate potential year-round effects from predator patrolling should they occur. There was no significant difference found in the capture rates pre- and during predator patrol for these four species. Also, no change was observed in the long-term nine-year trend in capture rates for the four species after predator patrol was initiated. Our results suggest that an increased human presence at net lanes may be useful in deterring predators at banding stations, while not affecting capture rates at the nets.

FABULA, CHRISTINA M. **LAND BIRD
MONITORING AT THE NAVARRO RIVER:
1997-2001.** Department of Fish and Game, 306
E. Redwood Avenue, Fort Bragg, CA 95437.
Corresponding author - cfabula@mcn.org,
cfabula@dfg.ca.gov

Five years of summer and fall mistnetting results from a northern California coast station are presented. Summary information and a review of the capture data for Black-headed Grosbeak, Swainson's Thrush, Wilson's Warbler, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, and Song Sparrow are explained. Post breeding dispersal and fall migration age ratios for several species are compared to previous studies. Discussion covers riparian vegetation changes at the site and potential future study.

GROSSELET, MANUEL¹, ROSA OBDULIA
GONZÁLEZ ROBLES² and GEORGITA RUIZ¹.
**FIRST TRENDS OF URBAN BIRD IN THE
SOUTHERN STATE OF OAXACA, MEXICO.**

¹The National Commission Of Protected Areas
In Mexico, Camino Al Ajusco No. 200, 3rd Floor,
Colonia Jardines En La Montaña, C.P. 14210,
Delegacion Tlalpan, Mexico D.F.; ²Mathematics
Department, Universidad Autónoma
Metropolitana-Iztapalapa (Uam-I). Corresponding
author - mgrosselet@conanp.gob.mx,
birdinnet@yahoo.com.mx.

The goal of this study is to determine the trends of the most common urban bird species in downtown Oaxaca, Mexico, based on a monthly systematic banding effort. The study began in December 2001 with the current protocol adopted in September 2002. A 36-mist-net-hour capture session takes place the last Sunday morning of each month applying the same protocol. So far we have captured 73 species with a total of 5,137 birds, which represents an average of 3.22 birds per mist net hour and over 720 recaptures (14% of total captures). We have analyzed the preliminary trends of 10 of the most commonly captured species (House Sparrow, House Finch, Audubon's Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Orchard Oriole, Rufous-backed and Clay-colored robins, Bronzed Cowbird, Lesser Goldfinch, and Western Tanager). The results so far show interesting trends, such as a steady increase in cowbird populations in the course of the years, and an apparent decrease in the House Finch population. The relevance of this study is that it is generating the first information available to evaluate local trends in southern Mexico and it is the second oldest constant-banding station in Mexico.

HERRERA, PABLO. **BIRD BANDING IN
GUATEMALA.** National Park Service Park
Flight Program, Bandelier National Monument,
15 Entrance Road, Los Alamos, NM 8754.
Corresp. author - pabloherrera@gmail.com.

Currently, the most important bird-banding project in Guatemala is MoSI (Winter Survival Monitoring). In Spanish, "Monitoreo de Supervivencia Invernal," which is intended to act as a counterpart to the

Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) for breeding birds in North America. At this moment, there are four MoSI stations in Guatemala located in the Pacific and Atlantic Lowlands. The most important of these is located in Cerro San Gil, Izabal, where the priority species is Swainson's Thrush. These stations are part of a five-year pilot project being managed by FUNDAECO with support from the USFWS. To this date, there are no permanent stations monitoring the Central Highlands. Projects are underway to set up MoSI stations in the central part of the country in order to obtain information on some priority conservation species such as the migrant Golden-cheeked Warbler or the endemic Azure-rumped Tanager. Although most bird banding efforts in Guatemala focus on migrant songbirds, some studies have been conducted for local highland species, such as the research carried out in the Cloud Forest at Los Albores, Zacapa. Guatemala's highland forests have a high level of endemism and many species are extremely susceptible to climatic change or habitat degradation. Since the highlands of Guatemala are extremely threatened by deforestation and agricultural advancement, we urgently need information on how to preserve, improve and manage these areas in order to keep bird communities healthy. Due to these projects, we are beginning to understand the seasonal altitude migration patterns of the Resplendent Quetzal and the distribution of the endemic Pink-headed Warbler. Hopefully, with the information obtained, we will be able to determine how to keep the populations healthy by preserving connectivity amongst populations and corridors for altitude migration.

HUMPLE, DIANA, MICHAEL ROGNER, GRANT BALLARD, THOMAS GARDALI and GEOFFREY GEUPEL. **TRENDS OF WINTERING LANDBIRDS IN CENTRAL COASTAL CALIFORNIA AND CORRELATIONS WITH WEATHER PATTERNS.** PRBO Conservation Science, Palomarin Field Station, 999 Mesa Road, PO Box 1074, Bolinas CA 94924. Corresponding author - dhumble@prbo.org

Relatively few studies have examined long-term changes in populations of temperate-wintering

songbirds. We examined 24 years (1979 – 2003) of winter banding data from the Palomarin Field Station in central coastal California. We had two objectives: (1) to estimate population trends for temperate wintering passerines; and (2) to investigate how weather influences abundance. A diverse landbird community over-winters at this site and eight species were included in analyses: Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Varied Thrush, Townsend's Warbler, Fox Sparrow, and Golden-crowned Sparrow. We found a significant negative trend for Ruby-crowned Kinglet and positive trends for American Robin and Varied Thrush. These were similar to some of the BBS results from regions where our wintering individuals presumably breed. We examined weather and climate variables that might influence local wintering populations, including winter rainfall, winter temperature, the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, and spring temperature and rainfall at the presumed breeding grounds (further north). Capture rates, including those for species not showing significant trends, were affected by current- and prior-winter local weather and not by spring weather on the breeding grounds. Understanding the climatic factors that are influencing temperate wintering birds will help identify the manner in which anthropogenic factors are playing a role in their population trends.

POLLINGER, JOHN, BORJA MILA and THOMAS SMITH. **SURVEY OF AVIAN INFLUENZA IN NORTH AMERICAN SMALL MIGRATORY PASSERINES.** UCLA Center for Tropical Research, 300 La Kretz Hall, 619 Charles Young Drive South, Los Angeles, CA 90095. Corresp. author - jpolling@ucla.edu

The UCLA Center for Tropical Research initiated a project in the spring of 2006 to survey the current presence and strains of avian influenza in small migratory passerines, throughout the lower 48 contiguous US states. This project is a unique collaboration with the Institute for Bird Populations and USFS Redwood Sciences Lab and the bird banding community, where samples are collected by the respective bird banding station networks—MAPS and LaMMNA. The overall objective of the project is to help elucidate the variety and current distribution of avian influenza strains within and

between species across the country and use that information to help predict the possible future distribution and transmission of high pathogenic avian influenza strains (i.e., H5N1 HPAI). Banding station volunteers are collecting cloacal swabs for avian influenza testing and feather samples for corresponding genetic/isotopic connectivity studies. We expect the collection of some 12,000 to 15,000 samples ultimately from this spring/summer. We will discuss the current status of the project, our testing efforts (at Los Alamos National Lab and UCLA), future plans, and the current status of H5N1 HPAI detection from other surveys (e.g., USFWS/USGS Alaska surveys from this spring/summer). Finally, we will discuss the key issue of proper safety practices when handling birds in general and in the case of H5N1 HPAI detection in North America.

RALPH, C. JOHN. LaMMNA: EMPOWERING YOUR BANDING DATA WITH eBAND. U.S. Forest Service, Redwood Sciences Laboratory, 1700 Bayview Drive, Arcata, California 95521. Corresp. author - cjralph@humboldt1.com

The Landbird Migration Monitoring Network of the Americas (LaMMNA) is closely working with Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology to make your banding data compatible with other stations. The first step of integrating data to a common format, or schema, has been accomplished. We are now bringing in large sets of data from a few banding stations, including such diverse entities as decades of Vermont Institute of Natural Science banding, and banders with a season or two of data. I will discuss privacy, access, and security for your data and ideas.

SAKAI, WALTER H. A COMPARISON OF AFTERNOON AND MORNING MIST NETTING EFFORTS. Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Blvd, Santa Monica, CA 90405-1628. Corresp. author - sakai_walter@smc.edu.

The Zuma Canyon bird banding station is located in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Los Angeles County, California (34°02'55"N, 118°48'44"W). Banding occurs year round, every 3 to 4 weeks using 10-13 permanent net lanes in a coastal sage scrub, hard chaparral

habitat. Banding is conducted for five hours Friday afternoon until sunset, and for five hours Saturday morning starting at sunrise.

Most banding stations and banding protocols band during the morning hours. Although there seems to be a number of stations past and present that have banded in the afternoons, there seems to be no literature comparing the efficacy of afternoon (PM) vs morning (AM) banding sessions. Our banding protocol allowed for such a comparison.

In comparing annual banding totals from 1996-2005, I found that the PM sessions caught significantly fewer birds encountered than the AM sessions by year ($PM \bar{x} = 302.7 \pm 102.76$ vs $AM \bar{x} = 387.6 \pm 118.16$; paired t-test, $p = 0.001$, $n=9$). Significantly ($p < 0.05$) more *Picidae*, *Timalidae*, *Mimidae*, *Parulidae*, and *Emberizidae* were encountered in the AM; however, *Trochilidae*, *Tyrannidae*, *Corvidae*, *Aegithalidae*, *Troglodytidae*, *Regulidae*, *Turdidae*, *Cardinalidae*, *Icteridae*, and *Fringillidae* showed no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between PM and AM banding.

A comparison looking at individual species and their possible niches (feeding, foraging, migrant vs resident) did show a difference but no obvious patterns. Among the most abundantly encountered birds, Wrentits, Audubon's Warblers, and Spotted Towhees were significantly different ($PM < AM$) while Bushtits, Common Yellowthroats, Song Sparrows, House Finches, and Hermit Thrushes showed no difference. These findings may be important in such efforts as target netting. *? = The mean number of birds caught per year.

TÓRREZ, MARVIN. BIRD BANDING IN NICARAGUA. National Park Service Park Flight Program, Bandelier National Monument, 15 Entrance Road, Los Alamos, NM 87544. Corresp. author - marvtorrez@yahoo.com.

The history of bird banding in Nicaragua dates from 1996-1997 when the first generation of ornithologists became qualified banders with the help of the United States Agency for International Development (US-AID) and the United States Forest Service. In October 2002, the Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) gave the first advanced workshop on sexing and aging passerines birds. The workshop was for Nicaraguan biologists and

ecologists working with birds with the objective of establishing monitoring stations during the winter. With this workshop, Peter Pyle and David DeSante started a pilot project to investigate avian survivorship in winter habitats, *Monitoreo de Supervivencia Invernal (MoSI)*. The project started in four protected areas and today has banding stations in seven protected areas. The objective of another important monitoring program is to gain information about Nicaragua's resident forest birds. This banding program is the first project working with its own methods extended from MoSI. The methods include recording such measurements as tarsus length, bill length and width, length of outer tail feathers, and length of the 9th primary. The information will be used to produce a calendar of nesting and chick-rearing seasons to determine precisely the ages of resident birds. Two of the three protected areas involved were already part of MoSI.

RETIRING EDITOR

Those who know me probably will not find "retiring" the most appropriate adjective. But it is an apt description of what I will be doing by the time this issue is in the hands of *NABB* readers.

After shepherding WBBA contributions through 25 issues of *NABB*, I am ready for a change and am happily passing the baton of the WBBA editor to Walt Sakai, who begins his term with Volume 32.

Thanks to authors, reviewers, readers, and fellow editors, this job has been interesting, rewarding, and sometimes even fun. Best wishes to all of you.

Kay Loughman

ANNUAL REPORT ERRORS

To our dismay and intense embarrassment, we have been advised of several errors in the WBBA Annual Report of Birds Banded for 2005. Among them were the reports of the following banders: A06, B08, I03, and P03. We will make corrections to the electronic version of the Annual Report which appears on the WBBA web page. We apologize both to our readers and to the banders whose data was misrepresented in the report.

**Walt Sakai, Compiler
Kay Loughman, Editor**

GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR 2007

The Western Bird Banding Association (WBBA) offers two \$500 grants each year, one for research and the other for monitoring, for individuals and/or organizations engaged in projects in the New World using marked birds. The research grant should help test a hypothesis, while the monitoring grant is intended to help individuals or institutions establish or continue monitoring programs that investigate changes in bird populations. Students (including undergraduates) and organizational interns are encouraged to apply.

Grant awardees will be asked to submit results of their grant projects for publication in future issues of *North American Bird Bander* as well as present results at future WBBA annual meetings.

Applicants for these grants should submit a project proposal and two letters of reference attesting to the qualifications of the applicant. Proposals must include a description of the research or monitoring program that includes objectives, methods, and a budget detailing how requested funds will be used. Applicants may increase their chances by having smaller project budgets or detailing the use of requested funds for larger projects. The proposal constitutes the application and should be limited to no more than three typed pages, including full contact information. No additional forms are required; no information packets are available from WBBA.

Applicants for these annual grants should submit the information described above by 31 Aug to:

Geoffrey Geupel, WBBA Awards
PRBO Conservation Science
Palomarin Field Station
P.O. Box 1157
Bollinas, CA 94924 USA

Announcements of successful applicants will be made at the WBBA annual meeting in late summer/early fall, and funds will be available from the Treasurer soon after.