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Report of Banding and Re-encounters of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds from 2000-2011

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Inland Regional News

Inland Bird Banding Association

Founded 1922

President's Note

As I write this little note to the membership, I have just finished my 29th year of spring migration banding at Springville Marsh State Nature Preserve in northwest Ohio. Although I have only banded there about 13 days each spring, 7 each summer, and 13 days each fall, we have now banded 31,000 individuals of 122 species. Clearly we have documented what passerines are using the marsh and have a picture of trends for many of those species.

On 3 Jun 2012, we started our 17th summer season using the MAPS protocol. This is one of the most exciting times of our year. We banded 41 new individuals but had 29 recaptures of individuals from the past. One of the most exciting recaptures was an adult female Ruby-throated Hummingbird which was originally banded 7 Jun 2008. It is always fun to see "old" friends.

Our oldest individual this spring was an adult Black-capped Chickadee which was originally banded 18 Apr 2004 as an adult. Earlier this spring, while banding on Kelleys Island in Lake Erie, we had two ASY male Yellow Warblers in the same net about a foot apart. One was wearing band number 2440-16405 and the other was wearing 2440-16407. Both were banded in 2006 as ASY—one on 19 May and the other on 20 May. You have to love what we do.

If you have stories similar to these, please share them with the membership. Send in your notes and experiences to Peter Lowther, our editor, so others can see what you are doing and finding.

Do not forget to make plans to attend our Annual Meeting in Bellevue, Nebraska, over the weekend of 26-27 Oct 2012. Check the IBBA webpage for upcoming details.

Tom Bartlett
IBBA President

Report of Banding and Re-encounters of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds from 2000-2011

Over the few years I have been banding Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*), I manage to catch birds from the previous years' banding sessions. All but two of the re-encountered birds were caught at their original banding site in subsequent years, even though some of the banding sites are within two miles of each other, which indicates strong site fidelity. The percentage of re-encounters to newly banded birds is relatively constant, so I decided to find out how many birds from each year's list of re-encounters were from which previous year.

Over the 12 years of this project, there have been several banding sites that were visited in all years, some added, and some dropped for various reasons. The sites where I band weekly are in southern Illinois, and there are three sites in southern Indiana

and one site farther north in Illinois where I visit two or three times during the summer. I find the sites through friends and through the banding site hosts. I choose sites based on the number of birds using feeders. Usually, the homeowners have 10 to 20 feeders in use and are filling each of the feeders daily. In general, I select places with hundreds of birds frequenting feeders to maximize the number of birds banded and to increase the chances that these birds will be recaptured at other sites across their breeding range or during migration.

I use a Hall trap and the newly designed Dawkins trap at these sites. I do not use mist nets at these hummingbird banding sites because there are too many birds; and by using traps, I can limit the number of birds I catch at any one time so I can safely process each bird in a timely manner.

Currently, there are nine sites where I band weekly and four sites where I band monthly. Each year I begin banding birds when they return to feeders near the end of the first nesting cycle, which usually is

mid-June, although one year I began banding during the last week of May, and another year as late as the first of July, when birds did not return to feeders until then. Most years I visit banding sites from mid-June through the first week of October. As shown in Table 1, 2009 was an odd year because of very bad weather in May (inland hurricane), and very cold weather in June and July. That year I heard no young begging food from their mothers after 10 Jul, I caught no adults after mid-August, and no birds at all by mid-September.

I have listed in Table 1 a simple tally of newly banded birds and of re-encountered birds for each year from 2000 to 2011. The number of birds caught and banded each year has increased steadily since the year 2000, except for 2009, where locally bad weather lowered nesting success and migration occurred very early. However, in 2009, although the newly banded bird number was a little more than half the number (58%) from the previous year, the number of re-encountered birds was about 78% of the previous year's number. As shown in Table 1, there were two years of rather low re-encounter rates (2006 at 6.4%; 2007 at 6.0%), and one year of a high recapture rate (2002 at 16.1%), but most years are plus or minus two percentage points from a nine percent re-encounter rate. This small variation in re-encounter rates holds true even though more birds are newly banded each year.

In Table 2, I show the re-encountered birds by year of the original banding year. For example, in 2001, all birds re-encountered that year had to be from the year 2000, since that is the first year I banded Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. However, in 2006, I caught birds from all six previous years, 2000 through 2005, with just under half of that total number originally banded in 2005. As shown in Table 2, in each year the largest number of re-encounters was from the previous year's banded birds.

Lewellyn Hendrix and I presented a paper in 2007 at the Hummingbird Banders Group meetings in Bisbee, AZ, in which we showed that re-encounter rates decreased as the summer progressed; for example, fewer previously banded birds were

Table 1. Newly banded and re-encountered Ruby-throated Hummingbirds by year.

Year	Newly Banded	Recaptured from Previous Years	Recaptures as Percent of Newly Banded
2000	544	--	--
2001	800	86	10.7%
2002	1,661	268	16.1%
2003	1,693	196	11.5%
2004	2,322	308	13.2%
2005	3,423	326	9.5%
2006	4,621	295	6.4%
2007	4,707	282	6.0%
2008	4,746	428	9.0%
2009	2,765	337	12.1%
2010	4,982	422	8.4%
2011	6,382	628	9.8%
TOTAL	38,647	3,576	9.2% overall

Table 2. Original banding year of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds re-encountered from 2001 through 2011. Columns show original banding year; rows show re-encounter year.

Encounter Year	Year of Banding										
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
2001	86										
2002	139	129									
2003	26	87	83								
2004	22	35	103	148							
2005	12	13	43	70	188						
2006	3	2	10	30	105	145					
2007			2	2	35	59	184				
2008			4	6	27	54	143	194			
2009			1	2	8	10	41	78	197		
2010			1		12	8	34	68	88	211	
2011					3	6	13	32	73	89	412

caught in September than in July. At some sites, in the first month of the banding season, about half of the birds caught during a banding session were re-encounters. This indicates that many of the site's breeders have been banded. It was also apparent that more females were re-encountered in subsequent years than males, and it was about twice as likely to re-encounter a bird originally banded as an adult rather than as an HY bird. This indicates that if a bird makes it through the first year of life, it is likely to

survive many years. The oldest bird I have recaptured was about nine years old: it was banded as an adult in 2002 and re-encountered in 2009 (see Table 2). Most of the birds re-encountered are between four and five years old.

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Margery Adams Bird Banding Station - Spring 2012 Report Adams Wildlife Sanctuary, Springfield, IL

The Margery Adams Bird Banding Station's (MABBS; coordinates: 394-0983) spring banding season for 2012 ran from 27 Mar through 24 May at the 40-ac Adams Wildlife Sanctuary (an urban site in Springfield, IL). From 11 to 26 nets were used on 44 mornings (weekdays and some Saturdays) producing 4,195 net-hours of operation. [One net-hour is the use of one standard, 12-m net for one hour during daylight hours.] The final tally was 810 birds of 76 species banded with an average of 0.19 birds per net-hour. Another 180 birds (plus one more species) were captured as returns and repeats.

With the intentional and intense removal of the invasive understory (winter creeper, bush honeysuckle and other exotics) in the front portion of the banding area, the nets previously used in this "now-cleared" woodland were relocated temporarily in what was thought to be a similar wooded area in the back portion of the sanctuary; however, the number of captures in these newly located nets was extremely poor. The six nets in the "prairie" portion of the sanctuary were most productive for species associated with non-woody vegetation, including several sparrows (especially Field, Song and