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Primary Feather Replacement on a Hatch Year Common Pauraque (*Nyctidromus albicollis*)

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INTRODUCTION

Pauraques, like many other caprimulgids, present a partial molt during its first pre-basic molt (Pyle 1997, Howell et al 2003), where the juvenal flight feathers and some to all wing coverts are retained through the second pre-basic molt. After an individual has completed its first pre-basic molt, a HY/SY bird is easy to recognize due to its obvious panel of retained juvenal flight feathers, buff tips on the primary coverts and outer secondaries, as well

as the narrow and tapered shape of the outer primaries (Pyle 1995, 1997). Despite being a common species and a commonly captured species in our banding station in Pantano de Santa Alejandrina (17°59'23" N, 94°30'24"W) ciudad de Minatitlan, Veracruz, Mexico, no previous evidence of primary replacement on HY birds has been reported.

OBSERVATION

On 28 Aug 2012, while banding nocturnal birds, we trapped and banded a Common Pauraque (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) that presented the typical plumage and characteristics of a HY bird: primary coverts retained, outer primaries narrow and tapered, juvenal alula, two outermost retained juvenal greater coverts, juvenal secondaries uniform in wear, outer secondaries distinctly tipped with buff, and narrow and tapered rectrices with some amount of white on the outermost rectrices. The skull had a large unpneumatized area. Clearly, this bird had completed its first pre-basic molt. Those characteristics gave us the confidence

to age the bird as a HY. Interestingly, we noticed that p1 had been replaced symmetrically. Both p1 had a darker shaft, darker barbs, bigger size, less buff on the tip and a more truncate shape compared to the other inner primaries (Fig. 1) Due to the amount of white on the outer rectrix (r6), it is probable that the bird was a male, but we are not confident about sex criteria for young birds.

Although the Common Pauraque is a common species through its distributional range, many aspects of its biology are still largely unknown (Latta and Howell 1999). Through this paper we would like to contribute to the knowledge of the molt strategy of the species.

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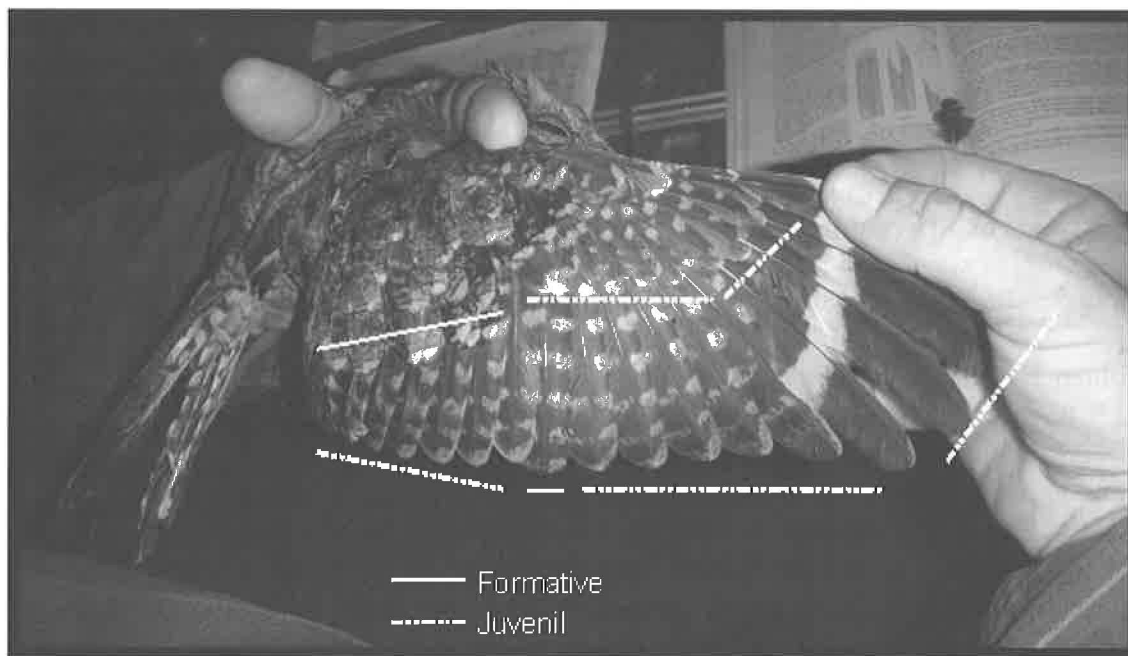


Fig. 1. Retained juvenal feathers marked by the dotted lines and replaced feathers marked by the solid line. Clearly, p1 has been replaced.

[Editor's Note: Fig. 1 is available in high resolution color at http://www.westernbirdbanding.org/NABB37_3_Ojeda.pdf].

two public administrations, allowed the survey of bird populations in Santa Alejandrina Marsh, Minatitlán, Veracruz, from 2008 to 2012, as a bioindicator of the results to decontamination and restoration of the habitat.

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50-Year Trends of a Breeding Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) Population in South-Central Montana

Golden Eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) in the western U.S. have received increased attention due to an apparent decline in the number of annual migrants and expected increased risk from energy development. Factors influencing the negative trend in migrating Golden Eagles are unknown and it remains unclear if this trend is indicative of a declining population or changes in migratory behavior. Unlike Golden Eagles nesting in higher latitudes, resident birds that breed in the western U.S. are typically non-migratory or do not follow typical migratory pathways. Unfortunately, long-

term research focused on resident, breeding Golden Eagles in this region is rare and sorely needed to assess the status of the population as a whole. Beginning in 2010, I revisited an historically surveyed study site to compare the current status of the Golden Eagle breeding population to that from the 1960s. In the last three breeding seasons, I have documented a near 100% occupancy rate of historic territories and an increase in the number of breeding pairs by roughly 42%. To investigate factors influencing this population expansion, I am currently assessing the degree of landscape change and influence of environmental factors on breeding Golden Eagle density and productivity by comparing the availability of selected breeding habitat. The longevity of data collected in this study area allows for one of the longest-term comparisons of Golden Eagle nesting density and success in the western U.S. and provides invaluable insight into the landscape factors responsible for maintaining or increasing breeding Golden Eagle populations.

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