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A long-lived and site-faithful junco

I have been banding songbirds and other near-passerine species coming to my bird feeders each winter since 2006-2007, using a combination of Potter traps and mist nets as weather permits. This is at my home in eastern Vinton County, within the hilly unglaciated Appalachian plateau region of southeastern Ohio. My special interest is in monitoring longevity and winter site fidelity in migrant sparrows and finches.

On 13 Feb 2018, I recaptured a male Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco I had banded on 16 Jan 2009. It had been four seasons since I had encountered any other of the 109 juncos I banded in that winter. And he has been recaptured at least once during every winter but one (2015-2016) in the years since banding. Aged as second year at banding, he had a wing chord of 74 mm, tail 66 mm, weight was 21.9 g, and fat score was one. On 13 Feb 2018, wing chord was 78 mm, tail 69 mm, weight 20.4 g, and fat again scored as one. One other junco returned in the eighth winter after banding. This bird has been the only one to return nine seasons later.

At this writing, in November 2018, juncos are yet to put in an appearance at my feeders. As you might expect, I am rooting for this particular male to appear in a trap or net again this winter.

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Species Snapshot: Eastern Screech-Owl (*Megascops asio*)

This is the sixth installment in our regular feature presenting a brief synopsis of the banding and encounter records submitted to the Bird Banding Lab for a particular species. Each installment will feature a new species; suggestions for species to be covered or data to be presented are welcome (swgabrey@gmail.com). Space limitations of NABB prohibit any in-depth analysis of the data and these notes are not meant to show any trends in population parameters such as population

density or growth rate, geographic distribution, etc. and should not be viewed as a definitive analysis of the status of the species. Although the banding program began in the 1920s, the currently available digital records for banding data include only those records from 1960 to the present (pre-1960 banding data are available in other formats.) All encounters, including those of birds banded before 1960, are available in digital format. The following summary includes only those birds banded and encountered from 1960 through Aug 2018 in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Banded birds

Numbers and Age and Sex Categories

Since 1960, 31,848 Eastern Screech-owls have been banded in the US, Canada, and Mexico (Table 1). Sex was identified (either at banding or upon encounter) for just 7% (n = 2,256); of these, 27% (n = 613) were males and 73% were females (n = 1,643). Of those banded as males, 79% (n = 484) were aged as ATY, TY, SY, ASY, or AHY compared to 18% (n = 112) aged as L or HY, and 3% (n = 17) aged as U. Of those banded as females, 89% (n = 1,460) were aged as ATY, TY, SY, ASY, or AHY compared to 10% (n = 163) aged as L or HY, and 1% (n = 20) aged as U. Of the 29,592 screech-owls for which sex was not identified, 34% (n = 9,963) were aged as ATY, TY, SY, ASY, or AHY compared to 58% (n = 17,028) aged as L or HY, and 9% (n = 2,601) aged as U.

Geographic distribution

Since 1960, Eastern Screech-owls have been banded in 41 of the United States (n = 29,166), 4 Canadian provinces (n = 2,680), and 1 Mexican state (n = 2) (Figure 1). About half of the screech-owls banded in the US were from 6 states: Ohio (n = 4,629), Texas (n = 3,814), Florida (n = 1,674), North Carolina (n = 1,594), Nebraska (n = 1,462), and South Carolina (n = 1,430). Three-quarters of the screech-owls banded in Canada were from Ontario (n = 2,035). The 2 screech-owls banded in Mexico were from Sonora.

Seasonal distribution

Over 53% (n = 16,863) of all Eastern Screech-owls banded in the US, Canada, and Mexico were banded between May and Aug, 12% (n = 3,969)