

Banding Office Newsletters

MEMORANDUM TO BANDERS

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- [Update on the Species at Risk Act \(SARA\) and Bird Banding](#)
- [Williamson's Sapsucker Endangered](#)
- [Parks Canada Online Permit System](#)
- [Do Not Band Domestic Hybrids or Released Exotic Birds](#)
- [Band Manager Status](#)
- [Band Quality and Supply](#)
- [North American Banding Council Update](#)
- [Landbird Migration Monitoring Network of the Americas \(LaMMNA\)](#)
- [Bird Banding in the British Virgin Islands](#)
- [Bird Banding Laboratory Memorandum to All Banders \(MTAB\)](#)
- [Requesting Information on Foreign Encounters through Listservers](#)
- [New Information](#)
- [Reminders](#)

Update on the Species at Risk Act (SARA) and Bird Banding

The incidental capture and banding of species at risk is not provided for under the [Species at Risk Act](#) (SARA), so banders without specific projects or permits to capture and band threatened or endangered migratory birds should do everything possible to avoid capturing them. This includes avoiding setting nets and traps in areas where you know or expect that you could capture a threatened or endangered species. All capture and banding of species at risk must be done within the framework of approved scientific research projects that support the recovery and conservation of the species. If, despite your efforts to avoid capturing threatened or endangered migratory birds, you do inadvertently capture one, release it immediately unbanded and record it. Report the capture to the [Bird Banding Office](#) with your yearly paperwork. We are currently working to revise this policy to allow incidentally captured species to be banded under certain conditions.

Williamson's Sapsucker Endangered

In May 2005, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) designated [Williamson's Sapsucker](#) (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*) as Endangered. There is a small breeding population of Williamson's Sapsucker in south-central British Columbia with a total estimated population of 430. For more information on this and other species at risk visit the [Species at Risk](#) Web site.

Parks Canada Online Permit System

In June 2004, Parks Canada launched an online research and collection permit system. The system is publicly accessible through the Internet on [Parks Canada's](#) Web site (detailed guidance to researchers on how to use the system is included there). If you wish to band birds in national parks, national marine conservation areas, national historic sites of Canada, or other areas administered by Parks Canada, you first need to apply for a permit through the online system. The criteria set out in the Species at Risk Act (SARA) for permits relating to species listed under that Act will be considered through this application process. Your application will be processed by the relevant park or site, using both national and site-specific criteria.

Do Not Band Domestic Hybrids or Released Exotic Birds

Occasionally banders report banding domestic x wild hybrids. We would like to remind you that federal bands should not be used on hybrids with domestics. Exotic species such as mandarin ducks or pet trade birds are occasionally found in the wild, but wild populations are not well established and are not part of the North American Banding Program. Please do not band these birds. Some exotic species such as the House Sparrow, European Starling, and Garganey have well-established breeding populations in North America and are part of the banding program. If you are conducting a scientific study on hybrids or wild exotics, please contact the [Bird Banding Office](#) for instruction on how you may mark these species for your study.

Other species that should not be banded with federal bands are Rock Pigeons, vultures, and gallinaceous or upland game birds.

Band Manager Status

A new version of [Band Manager](#), version 3.1, is ready for beta-testing. Version 3.1 has Windows menus and other improvements. By clicking on the link above, you will find more information and be able to download the new version. Many problems with version 2.1 have been resolved in version 3.1. Keep in mind that 3.1 is still in the testing phase. If you choose to use this version we ask that you report any errors or bugs to our office.

[Louise Laurin](#) provides Band Manager support, so you may call her if you are having difficulties. Band Manager support is also available through the listserver [BANDMGR](#).

Band Quality and Supply

We have received many complaints on band quality recently, including reports of difficulty distinguishing the numbers, bands not closing squarely, and many comments on the new 1Bs. We recently changed band manufacturers, and the 1B bands are now thinner. The thinner band results in a reduced external diameter; however, the internal diameter is still the same. The new 1Bs do not fit very well in standard pliers, so please take care to ensure that bands are completely closed and not overlapping. Some banders have had success by applying masking tape to their pliers to reduce the size. We realize this is not an ideal solution and are looking into ways to improve the quality of all our bands.

We appreciate your letting us know when you receive substandard bands. Your feedback assists us in improving the quality of the bands. If you are dissatisfied with a string of bands, please return them to the [Bird Banding Office](#). We will replace them, inspect them, and follow up with the manufacturer.

Inspecting bands is the responsibility of banders. Bands received from suppliers are randomly inspected before they are issued, but, because of the volume of bands used in North America, it is not possible to inspect them all.

Examine each string of bands to ensure they are the correct size. Before placing a band on a bird, quickly examine the band to ensure that the numerals are correctly placed, that the numbers are in the correct sequence and are readable, that there are no skips and especially no duplications in the number sequence, and that there are no sharp edges or corners on the band that could injure the bird.

The Bird Banding Office has all band sizes in stock. Please order bands only for the current banding season. This helps reduce the chance of a shortage of bands. Verify the accuracy of each band shipment by reviewing all band numbers (not just the envelopes or boxes). The [Bird Banding Office](#) should be notified immediately if there is a discrepancy between the band numbers and the issue slip.

North American Banding Council Update

The NABC met at the Archbold Biological Station, Florida, 11-13 February 2005. The new Shorebird Banding Guide has been completed and the new Waterfowl Banding Guide is very near completion. Contact the banding office for copies.

The International Committee, which had been inactive for some time, was reinstated with the following objectives:

- look at training and mentoring opportunities;
- support infrastructure for programs in the Neotropics;
- provide hardware and software for programs in the Neotropics; and
- develop education and outreach for programs in the Neotropics.

The Education Committee is preparing descriptions of exercises that can be used during bander training workshops. These will be available on the Web once they are completed. Trainers are reminded to submit their recertification information. Visit the [NABC](#) Web site for more information or to read meeting minutes.

Landbird Migration Monitoring Network of the Americas (LaMMNA)

Under the auspices of the Monitoring and Inventory Working Group of Partners in Flight/Compañeros en Vuelo/Partenaires d'Envol, a new landbird migration monitoring network has been formed in the United States and Latin America as a companion network to the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network. Similar to the CMMN, stations will operate during the spring and fall migration seasons. The network is aimed at expanding knowledge of the status of migratory landbirds by monitoring their populations through a network of monitoring stations, notably for changes in population numbers and composition, their routes, and sover habitats and sites. The formation of the network recognizes the urgent need for coordination among cooperating stations throughout the Americas and, in particular, for support, data management, data archiving, and data analysis. For more information visit their [Web site](#).

Bird Banding in the British Virgin Islands

The Darwin Initiative Project on Anegada of the British Virgin Islands has launched a new bird banding program. The undisturbed natural area of Anegada has extensive wetlands that host both resident endemic species and migratory birds that pass through the British Virgin Islands. Some of the birds banded in the British Virgin Islands may be on their way to Canada, so keep your eyes open for British Virgin Islands bands, which are inscribed with the address of the British Virgin Islands Conservation and Fisheries Department. If you do find a British Virgin Islands band, report it directly to the BVI Conservation and Fisheries Department, Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands, or to the [Bird Banding Office](#) and we will contact the British Virgin Islands banding scheme. In time, these data will provide insights into the biology and movements of the bird populations in the British Virgin Islands and allow any changes in bird numbers to be detected. It is expected that the British Virgin Islands bird banding scheme will be expanded to incorporate the rest of the British Virgin Islands, particularly those islands with globally important breeding seabird colonies, such as Great Tobago, which hosts a Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) colony, and Cockroach Island, which has a Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougalli*) colony.

Bird Banding Laboratory Memorandum to All Banders (MTAB)

The USA Bird Banding Laboratory has published [number 87](#) (March 2005) of the *Memorandum to All Banders*. The *Memorandum to All Banders* will remain infrequent, with production based on need. Distribution of the memorandum will be through a listserver. Canadian banders interested in receiving the *Memorandum to All Banders* can subscribe by sending a message with "subscribe bblnews your name" in the body of the message to the e-mail address listserv@rana.er.usgs.gov.

Requesting Information on Foreign Encounters through Listservers

Many encounters are reported to BIRDBAND, Sawwhetnet, or other lists but are never reported to the Bird Banding Office. The success of the banding program is dependant on timely reporting of encounters, and these data are required in order to keep our database current and accurate. Please be sure to report encounters to the Bird Banding Office before requesting information from email listservers. Report your observations by calling the [Bird Banding Office](#), by sending an e-mail message, or by Canada Post.

New Information

- *Studies in Avian Biology* recently published a volume entitled *Monitoring Bird Populations Using Mist Nets*. This volume features a collection of 25 scientific papers from a 1993 symposium and can be purchased through the [Cooper Ornithological Society Web site](#) for \$23.00 USD.
- [Avian Conservation and Ecology](#) - Écologie et Conservation des Oiseaux (ACE-ÉCO). ACE-ÉCO is a new fully electronic scientific journal with all articles freely and fully available to everybody throughout the world. Sponsored by the Society of Canadian Ornithologists and Bird Studies Canada, the journal publishes peer-reviewed scientific papers focusing on the conservation, ecology, and status of birds.
- Be sure to visit our Web site. We have been updating and adding new information of interest to banders. We are always open to suggestions for information you would like to see on the Web site and welcome your photos to add interest to the site.

Reminders

- Since fall 2004 the Bird Banding Office has been using new bird banding permit application and testimonial forms. These forms help us to better assess applicants' skills and experience by soliciting detailed information on the number of species and individuals banded as well as experience with various nets, traps, and auxiliary markers. [Application forms](#) can now be downloaded from our Web site.
- We are now offering the option of providing Memorandum to Banders electronically. Electronic Memos have the advantage of allowing you to click on the links and will reduce the amount of paper that flows through your home or office. If you would like to be added to our electronic mailing list and have not done so already, please e-mail [Louise Laurin](#) with "Electronic Memo to Banders" as the subject heading. Recent and back issues of the Memorandum to Banders can be accessed at any time on our Web site.
- If you have not already submitted your banding schedules for 2004, please do so soon. We need your data so that we can process reported band recoveries and track which bands are on birds and which are sitting unused. Data submission is your obligation under your master or station permit. Many thanks to all banders who submit their schedules regularly. The BBO can refuse to issue new bands or renew expired permits if schedules are not submitted within a reasonable time.
- **Visit the Web site of your local banding association:**

[Eastern Bird Banding Association](#)
[Inland Bird Banding Association](#)

[Ontario Bird Banding Association](#)
[Western Bird Banding Association](#)

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