

# **Banding Office Newsletters**

## **MEMORANDUM TO BANDERS**

**Number 87**

**Fall 2005**

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

The Banding Office recently received approval to allow banders to band species at risk captured incidentally during regular banding activities. We will soon update permits with a new general condition outlining how and when this can be done. The new permit condition will limit banding to incidentally captured birds only. Banders are expected to do everything possible to avoid capturing species at risk including avoiding setting nets and traps in areas where you know or expect that you could capture a threatened or endangered species. You will receive more details with your revised permit.

### **Incidental capture of Hummingbirds**

Anyone operating mist nets should be familiar with how to extract and release hummingbirds safely. We highly recommend that all banders using mist nets for passerines read the NABC Hummingbird Banding Manual which is available free upon request from the Banding Office. Hummingbirds should never be held by the bill or by the feet but rather should be held gently around the body. Always check the hummingbird for a band and release promptly. In order to band hummingbirds you must have a hummingbird authorization on your banding permit. Banders who would like to receive permission to band hummingbirds must obtain training in hummingbird banding prior to requesting changes to their banding permit. For more information contact Lesley at the Banding Office 613-998-0515.

The Hummingbird Monitoring Network (THMN) is a science-based, project-driven nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of hummingbird diversity and abundance throughout the New World. The HMN's monitoring program relies upon information obtained by repeated, standardized banding and counting efforts at multiple sites. In 2005, the HMN monitored 28 sites in Western North America including several in Canada where 2629 hummingbirds were banded as part of the network.

The network is interested in expanding to other regions. Interested individuals should contact Dr. Susan Wethington by e-mail at [swething@dakotacom.net](mailto:swething@dakotacom.net) or visit their website <http://www.thegeorgewalkerhouse.com/id55.htm> for more information.

Hummingbird banders can join the HUMBAND listserv by visiting <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/humband/>.

## Band Issues

The Bird Banding Laboratory in the USA keeps a two year supply of bands in stock in an attempt to eliminate band shortages. With approximately 1.2 million birds banded in North America (300,000 in Canada) each year, that's a lot of bands! Currently we have all sizes in stock with the exception of 4 shorts due to recent band quality issues.

### New band sizes

At the request of banders, the banding program will soon be stocking the following new band sizes. If you require these new sizes please send your requests to Chantal.

Band Size	Species	Band Height	Inside Diameter
1D Butt-end Hard metal	Loggerhead shrikes and cardinals	5.00 mm	3.5 mm
5A Butt-end	Wood Ducks	7.95 mm	8.738 mm
8A Rivet	Small Bald Eagles	15.875 mm	20.65 mm
9R Rivet	Large Golden Eagles	15.875 mm	28.575 mm

### Lock-on Bands

It has been suggested that we discontinue lock-on bands and replace them with hard metal (incoloy) butt-end bands. We would like raptor banders to let us know their thoughts on this suggestion. Please e-mail [Lesley-Anne.Howes@ec.gc.ca](mailto:Lesley-Anne.Howes@ec.gc.ca) with your thoughts. We would still make rivet bands for eagles.

### 1Bs

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.

### Banding Pliers

We have heard from many banders about the shortage of banding pliers. Avinet (<http://www.avinet.com/>) now sells banding pliers. The US Bird Banding Lab is working with banders to test banding pliers prototypes manufactured by Avinet.

### Band Transfer

As a reminder banders may NOT transfer bands to another bander without prior approval from the Bird Banding Office. After verbal approval is received from the BBO, the permittee who is transferring bands should send a written request to the Banding Office identifying the range of bands and both permit names and numbers. Both banders involved in a transfer will receive written confirmation of the transfer from the Bird Banding Office.

## Banders Reporting GPS Coordinates

If banders are reporting their location coordinates from a GPS unit, please be sure that the unit is calibrated correctly prior to use. Also, please state in the location table that a GPS unit was used to obtain the coordinates. We still require a meaningful location description even with GPS coordinates (ex: Rideau River, 6 miles W of Ottawa (by GPS)).

## Avian Influenza

Daily we are hearing the news reports about avian influenza in domestic poultry and wild bird populations and the possibility of mutation to a form that can readily infect humans. There are a lot of uncertainties concerning this disease and how it affects wild bird populations. Although some strains of avian influenza are prevalent in North America, as of the release of this memo, the Asian strain of H5N1 has not been detected in North America and so risk of contracting avian flu from wild birds in North America is very low. However as wild bird handlers, banders should practice safe handling of birds to ensure their safety and minimize disease transmission between birds.

Environment Canada has prepared an information note that includes biosafety practices for bird banders. The note can be viewed at <http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/nwrc-cnrf/default.asp?lang=en&n=85DA56D5> and is linked to the BBO webpage. Biosafety information for bird banders is copied below:

*It is considered safe to handle healthy birds, especially if the following precautions are observed:*

1. *Minimize unnecessary stress when handling wild birds, through efficient processing and appropriate restraint.*
2. *Minimize direct contact with wild birds, by wearing protective clothing and gloves. If you are working under conditions where aerosols may be generated, or body fluids may be sprayed, consider wearing eye protection (glasses, goggles, face shield) and a mask that covers your nose and mouth.*
3. *If working indoors, ensure proper ventilation. If working outdoors, try to stay upwind of birds to avoid inhalation of dust, feathers, and aerosols.*
4. *Dispose of gloves and contaminated material immediately in an appropriate fashion (i.e. sealed in plastic bags).*
5. *Wash hands after handling birds, especially prior to eating, drinking, or smoking, which should be done away from the vicinity of birds.*
6. *Disinfect all banding and sampling tools with 10% bleach between uses on individual birds.*
7. *Disinfect all bird restraint, holding, and transportation devices between uses. Bird bags should be washed with bleach before reuse.*
8. *Disinfect all surfaces regularly.*
9. *If you are exposed to blood, respiratory secretions or feces, wash skin immediately with soap and water (or alcohol-based disinfectants). Flush contaminated wounds and eyes thoroughly with clean water or saline, and report all injuries/exposures to your supervisor (if applicable).*
10. *If collecting blood, fecal, or tissue samples, wear gloves and handle samples and sharps according to established biosafety protocols. Ensure that you have the training you need to prevent contaminating yourself, the birds, or the samples (in that order!).*
11. *If you observe sick or dead birds and suspect that disease may be involved, contact appropriate Canadian Wildlife Service personnel and the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre (call 1-800-567-2033 to learn how to collect and submit carcasses).*
12. *If you become ill while handling birds or shortly thereafter, notify your supervisor (if applicable) and see your doctor. Inform your doctor that you have been in contact with wild birds.*
13. *For public health reasons, people who frequently handle wild birds should consider annual vaccination against seasonal human influenza. This will not protect people from avian influenza, but it will reduce the likelihood of a person becoming infected with both human and avian influenza strains simultaneously. This reduces opportunities for viral reassortment and mutation.*

The Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre (CCWHC) <http://wildlife1.usask.ca/> coordinates Canada's national wildlife health surveillance program. In cooperation with the Canadian Wildlife Service, duck banders and other agencies, the CCWHC has an active avian influenza surveillance program. During the 2005 field season, over 4400 cloacal swabs were collected from waterfowl across the country during regular banding operations. Preliminary results are released as they become available. See <http://wildlife1.usask.ca/en/newsletter.php> and [www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/disemala/avflu/2005wildsauv/surenge.shtml](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/disemala/avflu/2005wildsauv/surenge.shtml). The surveillance program will be expanded to cover more locations and species types during the next year.

Banders can contribute to avian influenza surveillance in Canada by contacting regional CCWHC, CWS or provincial/territorial wildlife offices upon detection of large numbers of sick or dead birds.

Health Canada's website provides additional information on avian influenza as it relates to public health [http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/avian\\_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/avian_e.html).

## 1-800-Mexico

At the request of the Flyway Councils, the North American Banding Program expanded the 1-800 toll free band reporting number into Mexico in August 2004. A bilingual clerk was hired to answer Spanish calls and a contract was given to Ducks Unlimited of Mexico (DUMAC) to manage public outreach. Most of the outreach is focused towards hunters but other groups will be targeted in the future. One year later the initiative has met with success with recoveries from 34 species and 329 individuals. This is a substantial increase in reported recoveries from other years for example, 64 birds were recovered in Mexico in 2000 and 104 in 1999. In recent meetings between Canada, USA and Mexico, a more involved level of participation for Mexico the North American Banding Program was discussed.

### Recoveries from Mexico 2004-2005

Blue-winged Teal	107	American Kestrel	1
Redhead	49	California Gull	1
Pacific Brant	45	Canada Goose	1
Mourning Dove	24	Canvasback	1
Northern Pintail	24	Eared Grebe	1
White-Fronted Goose	10	Indigo Bunting	1
Snow Goose (White Phase)	10	Lesser Scaup	1
Unidentified Teal	8	Lesser Snow Goose (Blue)	1
Green-winged Teal	7	Mallard	1
Brown Pelican	7	Orange-crowned Warbler	1
American White Pelican	6	Ovenbird	1
Cooper's Hawk	3	Purple Martin	1
Gadwall	3	Red-throated Loon	1
Mottled Duck	3	Western Gull	1
American Wigeon	2	Western Sandpiper	1
Ross' Goose	2	White-faced Ibis	1
Swainson's Hawk	2	White-winged Dove	1

<b>Totals</b>		<b>34 species</b>	<b>329 individuals</b>
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### **Pyle Edits**

The Errata for Pyle's *Identification Guide to North American Birds*, 1997 was updated June 2005. Please be sure to update your copy of Pyle by following the link from <http://www.birdpop.org/pyleguide.htm>.

### **Canadian Migration Monitoring Network meeting**

The 5th biennial Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN) meeting was held at Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (PEPtBO <http://www.peptbo.ca/>) in Prince Edward County Ontario October 14th to 16th. The meeting was attended by 32 members representing 16 banding stations from across Canada. Participants heard many interesting station presentations and were updated on some collaborative projects using the latest and developing technologies in bird monitoring such as the genetic barcoding the birds of Canada (Charles Francis), determining breeding ranges of migratory birds in the neotropics using radio isoets (Al Smith), the use of radar and acoustic instrumentation to monitor migrating birds across Lake Ontario and around wind farms (Rhonda Millikin) and tracking bird migration with radar in Nova Scotia (Mike Peckford). The meeting was followed by a two day workshop on advanced aging and sexing of passerines. For more information visit the CMMN website (<http://www.bsc-eoc.org/national/cmmn.html>) or contact Audrey Heagy [ahagy@bsc-eoc.org](mailto:ahagy@bsc-eoc.org).

### **Eastern Bird Banding Association's 2005 Annual Meeting**

Over 100 people attended the annual meeting of the Eastern Bird Banding Association hosted by Braddock Bay Bird Observatory in Rochester, NY, April 5-17 2005. There were many excellent presentations including David Brewer and Bruce Fortman's presentation on Northern Saw-whet Owl banding in Ontario and Eastern US. Danielle Kaschube gave a MAPS workshop which included discussions on the new molt terminology and working with MAPSPROG. A second workshop was given by Robert P. Yunick on passerine age-sex identification. Seven papers, 15 posters and updates from both the Canadian and US banding offices were presented. Field trips included tours of Braddock Bay Raptor Research's Owl Woods, raptor banding operation, and hawk count; BBBO's passerine banding station, and local birding hotspots in the Rochester area. Minutes of the meeting will be published in NABB 30:3. EBBA's 2006 Annual Meeting will be held in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, March 24-26. Visit EBBA's website <http://www.frontiernet.net/~bpbird/> for more information and membership instructions.

### **Inland Bird Banding Association's 2005 Annual Meeting**

IBBAs annual meeting took place at the Kellogg Biological Station near Richland, Michigan on Sept. 30 to Oct. 2nd. Sponsored by Michigan Field Ornithologists and Bird Banders, approximately 50 people enjoyed a very pleasant fall weekend. There were five student posters, five papers, an update from the banding lab and two evening program presentations. Saturday morning offered a walk around the biological station with Joe Johnson, who had presented Friday evening's program, "Restoring the Trumpeter Swan to the Midwest." The Saturday evening program was given by Jerry Weinrich, "An Overview of Past, Present and Future Recovery Efforts for the Kirtland's Warbler." Sunday morning all were invited to the Pittsfield Banding Station where many warblers and other migrating birds were captured and banded. Minutes will be

published in NABB. IBBA's 2006 meeting will be held near Chattanooga, TN in the fall; no specific date at this time.

Visit IBBA's website <http://www.aves.net/inlandbba> for more information and membership instructions.

## 100 years of Bird Banding in Canada

On September 24, 1905, James Henry Fleming placed a band on the foot of an American Robin in his backyard in Toronto, Ontario, in the hopes of discovering where it went for the winter. One hundred years later, over 900 banders place bands and markers on over 300 000 migratory birds each year in Canada. To read the full article visit our website <http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/nwrc-cnrf/default.asp?lang=En&n=B197CA34-0>.

## Reminders

- We are now offering the 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 at [bbo\\_cws@ec.gc.ca](mailto:bbo_cws@ec.gc.ca) 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 the Bird Banding Office Web site at <http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/nwrc-cnrf/default.asp?lang=en&n=1C3DC238>.
- 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 [http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/RPS/page1\\_e.asp](http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/RPS/page1_e.asp).
- Band Manager 3.1 is ready for beta-testing. You can find more information and download it at <http://www.bsc-eoc.org/download/bandmgr/bmdownload.html>. 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.

Band Manager support is available by calling Louise at 613-998-0524 or through the listserver <http://groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/BANDMGR>.

- Please be sure to report foreign encounters to the Bird Banding Office before requesting information from email listservers such as BIRDBAND or Sawwhetnet.
- **Join your local banding association:**
  - [Eastern Bird Banding Association](#)
  - [Inland Bird Banding Association](#)
  - [Ontario Bird Banding Association](#)
  - [Western Bird Banding Association](#)
- Banders are expected to follow the banders code of ethics:

## The Bander's Code of Ethics

1. More than anything else, banders are responsible for the safety and welfare of the birds they study. This means that stress and risks of injury or death need to be minimized. Some basic rules are as follows:
  - handle each bird carefully, gently, quietly, and with respect
  - capture and process only as many birds as you can safely handle
  - close traps or nets when there are known predators in the area
  - do not band in inclement weather
  - frequently assess the condition of traps and nets and repair them quickly
  - ensure trainees are properly trained and supervised

- check nets every 20 to 30 minutes
  - check traps as often as is recommended for each trap type
  - properly close all traps and nets at the end of the banding day
  - do not leave traps or nets set and untended
  - only double-bag non-aggressive birds of the same size and species
  - use the correct band size and banding pliers for each bird
  - treat all bird injuries in the most humane way
2. Banders must continually assess their own work to ensure that it is beyond reproach
    - reassess methods and your approach whenever an injury or mortality occurs,
    - accept constructive criticism from other banders.
  3. Banders must offer honest and constructive assessment of others' work to help maintain the highest standards possible:
    - publish innovations in banding, capture and handling techniques
    - educate prospective banders and trainers
    - provide feedback of any instances of mistreatment of birds to the bander
    - if there is no improvement, then file a report with the Banding Office
  4. Banders must ensure that the data gathered are accurate and complete.
  5. Banders must obtain permission to band on private property.

FROM THE BIRD BANDING OFFICE STAFF

Lesley Howes  
Bird Banding  
Biologist  
613-998-0515

Louise Laurin  
Senior Bird Banding  
Administrator  
613-998-0524

Chantal Marier  
Bird Banding  
Administrator  
613-998-0521