
A fellow in a hurry

Roger W. Foy

The daily morning routine at the Kiptopeke Beach Banding Station at the lower end of the Virginia Eastern Shore peninsula is almost always the same. Up at 0500; a look around outside checking for bird sounds — often an indication of a good or mediocre day; a quick breakfast; and down to the banding station to open the 47 nets before 0630.

24 October 1981 started off as partly cloudy with a wind of 15-25 mph (25-40 kmh) N-NW. As the day progressed it became increasingly cloudy but with no rain. With 10 assistants, we progressed through the day at a steady rate, processing 539 birds. At 1510, a Sharp-shinned Hawk was netted in one of our seven 2 3/8" mesh mist nets. This bird carried a band on its leg.

Upon arriving home at the end of October, we received a notification from the BBL that this bird was banded on — when? (you guessed it) **the same day it was retrapped** — 24 October 1981! Mary Forness banded it at Cape May Point Banding Station which is located at the extreme southern tip of New Jersey.

This really aroused my interest, so I wrote to Mary Forness for more particulars.

The bird was HY-M, carried band #782-53168, and was banded at Cape May Point (NJ) at 0902. It was a direct retrap at Kiptopeke (VA) at 1510. This is a straight line distance of 140 mi (224 km) in the SW direction, in 6 hours, or an average of 23.3 mph (37.5 kmh)!

I wish to thank Mary Forness and William Clark for permission to use their data in this saga of a swift foreign retrap.

I would appreciate hearing from other banders who have had the same day foreign retraps of raptors. I intend to write a paper in the near future exploring this fast movement.

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'Til death do us part

Roger W. Foy

Prior to moving to North Carolina, I resided in Ship Bottom, New Jersey, a town on the barrier beach island chain. While living there, we banded over 43,000 birds of 120 species in 13 years. Of these, well over 4,000 were House Finches, with some amazing results. Of these 4,000 plus birds, more than 255 returned and 29 were either foreign retraps or recoveries. These figures are from my two different House Finch populations.

Breeding birds were banded and never repeated in the winter months but have been recaptured in states south of N.J., in the winter. Banded wintering birds have never repeated in breeding or summer season but have been reported from all over northeast U.S. in the summer.

On 9 April 1977 two House Finches, #870-87760 and #870-87794, were banded respectively as AHY-F and AHY-M at Barnegat Light at the extreme northern end of Long Beach Island (N.J.). Imagine my astonishment when three years later we received notification that these two birds were recaptured at Island Beach State Park Banding Station (N.J.) which is approximately 16 km (10 mi) north of their banding location on the same day, 31 May 1980.

Data breakdown is as follows: The female was trapped and released by H. Cooper and the male was trapped and released by Mary Doscher.

These two birds were banded together on the same day, in the same back yard, and made three migratory round trips and were then recaptured on the same day in the same vicinity.

I must assume they were traveling together and have probably been together since their original banding in 1977.

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