



Inland Regional News

Inland Bird Banding Association

Founded 1922

President's Message

Those of you who attended our St. Paul meeting last September and heard John Tautin's report from the Bird Banding Lab. (BBL) may recall his reference to a workshop on the future of banding in North America to be held during the winter of 1989-90. This workshop was held at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center on January 30-31, 1990, and I attended representing IBBA. Also present were representatives of the other regional associations, several observatories, state agencies, the Canadian Wildlife Service, academics, ICBP and rehabilitators.

The agenda was very general and we were told the primary objective was to get our feelings on a variety of banding related subjects. We were assured by John Tautin of the BBL, and his superior, Robert I. Smith of the Office of Migratory Bird Management, that there was no intention of eliminating the work of volunteer banders or decreasing their role in the program. The BBL does not expect any significant budget cuts in the near future. The possibility of some tightening of permitting exists, but anyone with a solid project should have no worries.

Those in attendance were generally in agreement that banding plays a significant role in conservation education and this should continue; that banding of rehabilitated birds is vital to allow feedback; that banding as a tool for population monitoring is vital; and that recreational banding has value.

Some of the areas where the participants did not agree with each other or the sponsors, included: the need for computerizing all banding data vs. data which includes a recovery; the role that the BBL could or should play in the development of an atlas of band recoveries; how to organize and work with banding programs in Latin America; and the role of the regional banding associations in training and perhaps monitoring banders in their areas. The matter of fees was brought up but the sponsors did not seem to feel it was feasible or needed.

In summary, it was felt that more cooperative projects were desirable and the matter of what data the BBL could publish under the freedom of information policy needed further review.

The breaks provided good chances to chat with others and exchange ideas. It was a valuable conference and it was suggested that it may be repeated in the future. A transcript was made but will not be provided to those who attended. Some portions can be supplied upon request. I felt fortunate to be able to represent you at this conference and perhaps we can discuss some of the points I mentioned at our fall conference in Columbia, Missouri, October 12-14, 1990.

Peter C. Petersen

1990 CONFERENCE PLANS

The 1990 Inland Bird Banding Conference will be held **October 12-14 at Columbia, Missouri**. Co-sponsors are the University of Missouri Division of Biological Sciences and School of Natural Resources, the Columbia Audubon Society, and the Missouri Department of Conservation. The local chairman is: **John Faaborg, 105 Tucker Hall, University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, MO 65211**
(314) 882-6659

The banquet speaker is Dr. Scott Robinson of the Illinois Natural History Survey; his topic, Banding Studies in Rio Manu National Park, Peru. Further details are contained in the enclosed reservation flyer.

NATURE NOTES FROM NEBRASKA

I banded a Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) in Fontenelle Forest not long ago, and that started me thinking about the rise and fall of this southern species in eastern Nebraska. It is found only in the Missouri River bluffs and occasionally as far west as Lincoln in Lancaster County. The population has never exceeded 15 to 20 birds, even in the best of times and places.

In the late sixties and through 1978, Carolina Wrens were relatively common. Then came the very cold winters from 1979 through 1983, and this species, which is very sensitive to cold, was exterminated. Gone from Fontenelle Forest was the beloved call of "tea-kettle, tea-kettle," which birders had grown accustomed to hearing summer, winter, spring and fall. The cheery, ringing call, so long taken for granted, was not to be heard again for five years.

One early morning in August of 1983, I was birding along the Forest's Cottonwood Trail, when once again I heard the woods ring with the return of this beautiful singer. It wasn't to last long though--an extremely bitter December of that year either sent the ones I heard south or wiped them out again.

In April of 1984, I counted four or five birds. They have been able to "hold their own" since then and are successfully nesting once more. I banded my first immature bird on August 18, 1987.

Because Nebraska is on the extreme northern edge of this wren's range and also because it does not choose to migrate once it has established a territory, the populations will always be small and will fluctuate with the severity of Nebraska winters. But when it is in this neck of the woods, no singer can bring more joy to a birder or a bander than the jaunty little Carolina Wren.

Editor's Note: This is our third issue without many of you knowing who and where we are and print material has been scarce. Minnesota appears to have a very active banding group and their monthly newsletter has been a helpful source for us. If there are other local groups active within the IBBA area, we would certainly like to receive news of your activities. Any group that has a newsletter, please consider putting us on your mailing list. (I am assuming your permission to excerpt information interesting to the entire IBBA).

Ruth Green or Betty Grenon
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PAUL A. STEWART AWARD BIRD MOVEMENT RELATIVE TO THE EVOLUTION OF BIRD MIGRATION

Lynn M. Gordon, a student at San Diego State University, has been presented this award for a second consecutive year. Her study is entitled:

THE ROLES OF ENDOGENOUS AND EXOGENOUS FACTORS IN SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN JUVENILE WESTERN SANDPIPERS *CALDRIS MAURI*.

Differential migration in birds, defined here as differences in distance and timing of migration between sex and age classes from the same breeding area, creates skewed latitudinal wintering distributions of sex and age classes (Ketterson and Nolan 1983). While this phenomenon is well documented in the literature (reviewed in Gauthreaux 1978, 1982 and Ketterson and Nolan 1976), the mechanisms maintaining distributions are less clear. Both endogenous (internal) and exogenous (external) factors influence migration patterns, although the relative effects may vary greatly between species and among individuals within a species (Terrill and Ohmart 1984; Ketterson and Nolan 1985; Terrill 1987). A strong endogenous component may control migratory features such as migration distance, direction and timing, juvenile development, body features, habitat choice and food preferences (reviewed in Berthold 1984, 1985 and Gwinner 1977, 1986).

Current address: Lynn M. Gordon, Bodega Marine Laboratory,
P.O. Box 247, Bodega Bay, CA 94923 (707)875-2043.

WINTERING REDPOLLS

Redpolls are being banded by Ron Refsnider at Eastman Nature Center, MN. These are the first banded there since 1986. Denny Meyer has banded 350 Redpolls at his home in Roseville. Thirty-three of these have been Greater Redpolls with a wing chord over 80 mm and weight over 17.5 grams. In comparison, when Denny banded 4,000 Redpolls in the winter of 1977-78, he identified only one Greater Redpoll. Greaters are noticeably larger in the hand with a thicker, heavier bill. The culmen of Greater Redpolls tends to be convex, rather than straight or concave as in the Common (Hoary's have a similar bill). There is a key to age and sex of Common Redpolls in *Bird-Banding* 44:13-21.

Minnesota Bird Bander's Newsletter
Vol. 2, No. 1, February 1990

WINTER FEEDING AND BANDING OF PINE SISKINS

The Pine Siskins (*Carduelis pinus*), after a winter's absence, have again returned to my yard, so I am continuing my color marking of their breast feathers. November and December are marked orange, January-green, February-red, and March-blue. If the birds are still here, I will use stripes of red, white, and blue for April and green, white, and orange for May.

This is my 16th winter of banding Pine Siskins. My first siskin was caught eating dandelion seeds on 16 April 1966. No more appeared until 25 January 1976. Fifty-five were banded that spring and they have been coming ever since.

In four of the sixteen seasons, no siskins were banded (1975-76, 1979-80, 1982-83, 1988-89). The largest influx was the winter of 1977-78 when I banded 2,441 and could have banded more if there hadn't been a shortage of size 0 bands. There were three winters, 1981-82, 1983-84, and 1985-86, when I banded over 1,000 siskins a winter. Only once have they come in as early in the fall as November (1980-81). However, this winter (1989-90), there were 63 banded in November and 62 in December. This may be another record breaker with 270 in January and good prospects for the rest of the season.

Since 1966, 9,419 Pine Siskins have been banded in my backyard. From this total, only 46 have been accounted for, either recaptured alive or found dead. The most distant returns were of birds banded in the 1985-86 season: one from Maine in January 1987; one from Quebec, Canada in May '87; and one from So. Carolina in Feb. '88. Siskins seldom return to my banding station a second season; only three have been caught after an absence of a year or more.

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NETS NEEDED

A long-term study of the House Wren is desperately in need of 1" mesh nylon nets of the heavier denier no longer available from Avinet. We need the nylon nets of approximately 50 denier (not the 30 denier low-visibility nylon).

If you have any such nets, we would greatly appreciate the opportunity to purchase them or trade for some other type of net. Please contact:

L. Scott Johnson
Dept. Biological Sciences
University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta, T2N 1N4, Canada
(403) 220-5102

1989 BANDING RESULTS

Alfred H. Reuss
2908 Edison Street
Blue Island, IL.

The year 1989 marks 55 years of bird banding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. More habitat was lost due to the Alsip Park District creating three ball fields and a jogging/bike riding trail. However, they did make a big pond which the ducks and Canada Geese are using to date. The first six months of 1989 were equal to 1988; however, the last six months were very poor.

Banded 1,644 birds of 46 species with 148 returns at my home address, and 256 birds of 19 species with 65 returns at Palas Park. Received nine recoveries from USFWS. The top seven species banded in 1989 are:

| | | |
|----|----------------------|-----|
| 1. | European Starling | 442 |
| 2. | Mourning Dove | 213 |
| 3. | Common Grackle | 181 |
| 4. | American Robin | 172 |
| 5. | Slate-colored Junco | 132 |
| 6. | House Finch | 125 |
| 7. | Red-winged Blackbird | 124 |

Katharine B. Kelley
Baldwin City, KS.

My banding station is in my backyard in Baldwin City, Kansas. Of the 1,786 birds banded, the five House Finches were the most unusual for this area. My first House Finch was banded 22 February 1977--the first ever seen in this area. The second was banded 31 March 1988. Now in the winter of 1989-90, I have banded six. My top eight banded species were as follows:

| | | |
|----|--------------------|-------|
| 1. | American Goldfinch | 1,160 |
| 2. | Purple Finch | 243 |
| 3. | Pine Siskin | 125 |
| 4. | Northern Cardinal | 69 |
| 5. | Blue Jay | 59 |
| 6. | Dark-eyed Junco | 34 |
| 7. | Common Grackle | 17 |
| 8. | Downy Woodpecker | 14 |