Wader recoveries from eastern Africa. G. Nikolaus, J.S. Ash, G.C. Backhurst and D.J. Pearson. 1989. *Wader Study Group Bull.* 55:32-37. -Bosebuttel 4, 2859 Spicka, F.R. Germany. -(Recoveries of Black-winged Stilt, 6 plover species and 10 sandpiper species banded primarily in Ethiopia, Sudan and Kenya and recovered primarily in the USSR, but also in Europe, the Indian sub-continent and elsewhere in Africa. Recoveries in eastern Africa of birds banded elsewhere are also included.) MKM

Density of birds in eucalypt woodland near Armidale, northeastern New South Wales. H.A. Ford, L. Bridge and S. Noske. 1985. *Corella* 9:97-107. -Dept. Zool., Univ. New England, Armidale, N.S.W. 2351, Australia. -(Color banding showed that breeding densities of some species were best determined through territory mapping of color-banded birds, while social behavior in some species made this method unsuitable for them unless each bird was monitored intensely.) MKM

MKM = Martin K. McNicholl
RCT = Robert C. Tweit

News, Notes, Comments

Recently, Judith Bell, in her president's message for EBBA, made an appeal for line drawings, black and white photographs, and sketches for use in *NABB*. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the persons listed below for the line drawings and photos sent to the production manager as a response to her message. Some of the drawings have already appeared in the last three issues of *NABB*. If you would like to see your sketch, line drawing, or photograph in *NABB*, please send them to the production manager at the address on the back of the front cover.

Robert Pantle

Thanks to: Leslie A. DeCourcey
3117 Elm Avenue
Brookfield, IL 60513

Patricia A. Farris
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6201 Winnetka Avenue
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5 First Street
Marcellus, NY 13108

Change of Address?

Please inform the **Treasurer of your association** (EBBA, IBBA, or WBBA) as soon as possible or at least six weeks in advance of a planned change of address. Delivery of the *North American Bird Bander* cannot be guaranteed unless changes of address are received promptly. The U.S. Postal Service will not forward *NABB*, since it is mailed at bulk rate. Please do not send your change of address to the production manager as this will delay your copy of *NABB* even more. Any changes received by the production manager are sent to the appropriate association.

NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY RESEARCH GRANTS - 1991

The North American Bluebird Society announces the eighth annual grants in aid for ornithological research directed toward cavity-nesting species of North America with emphasis on the genus *Sialia*. Presently three grants of single or multiple awards are awarded and include:

Bluebird Research Grant
Available to student, professional or individual researcher for a suitable research project focused on any of the three species of bluebird of the genus *Sialia*.

General Research Grant
Available to student, professional or individual researcher for a suitable research project focused on a North American cavity-nesting species.

Student Research Grant
Available to full-time college or university students for a suitable research project focused on a North American cavity-nesting species.

Further guidelines and application materials are available upon request from:

Kevin L. Berner
Research Committee Chairman
College of Agriculture and Technology
State University of New York
Cobleskill, New York 12043

Completed applications must be received by December 1, 1990; decisions will be announced by January 15, 1991.

NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY RESEARCH GRANT AWARDS 1990

The North American Bluebird Society is pleased to announce the presentation of the seventh annual research grant awards. The 1990 recipients are as follows:

Bluebird Grants

Dr. Janis L. Dickinson, Hastings Natural History Reservation, Carmel Valley, California

Topic: Use of DNA fingerprinting to determine paternity in Western Bluebird nests.

Kevin L. Berner, State University of New York, College of Agriculture and Technology, Cobleskill, New York

Topic: Field tests of acceptance of Eastern Bluebirds of nest boxes which deter raccoon predation.

General Grants

Dr. Michael J. DeJong, Dept. of Biology, College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota

Topic: Indirect effects of the larvicide *Bacillus thuringiensis* on Tree Swallow breeding success.

Charlotte C. Corkran, Northwest Ecological Research Institute, Portland, Oregon

Topic: Reproductive success of Western and Mountain Bluebirds in grasshopper control areas, and potential for using bluebirds to reduce grasshopper densities.

Student Grants

Susan Meek, Biology Dept., Queen's University, Kingston, Canada

Topic: Parental investment and the maintenance of monogamy in Eastern Bluebirds.

Jonathan H. Plissner, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Clemson, Univ., Clemson, South Carolina

Topic: Does social dominance drive natal dispersal in Eastern Bluebirds?

The North American Bluebird Society annually provides research grants in aid for ornithological research directed towards cavity nesting species of North America with an emphasis on the genus *Sialia.* Information and application materials are available from Kevin Berner, Research Committee Chairman, College of Agriculture and Technology, State University of New York, Cobleskill, New York 12043.

LONG DISTANCE RECOVERY OF A LONG-LIVED COMMON BARN OWL BANDED IN NEW JERSEY

On 13 May 1976, I banded a five-week-old nestling Common Barn Owl *(Tyto alba)* #816-14277 near Belle Mead, Somerset County, New Jersey. This owl was recovered alive on 14 June 1988 at Killbuck Wildlife Area, Wayne County, Ohio, by John J. Henry. The bird, determined by Henry to be a male, was captured in a nest box with its mate and five nestlings. It was 12 years, 2 months old and was approximately 400 miles (650 km) due west of its birthplace when recovered.

On 14 October 1988, this owl was found dead on a roadside in Union County, Ohio, approximately 75 miles (125 km) southwest of where Henry captured it nesting. The bird had lived approximately 12½ years and had moved over 475 miles (775 km) west of its place of birth.

I believe this recovery is significant because of the bird's protracted longevity in the wild and because of its movements both in distance and direction.

Because Barn Owls are large birds that live in close proximity to humans, a high percentage of the birds banded are subsequently recovered. These recoveries have yielded much information on various aspects of their lives, including longevity and movements.

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Bird Banding records show that as of 20 December 1989, a total of 6,251 Barn Owls have been banded in the United States. Of this total, 1,392 (22.3%) have been recovered. Not surprisingly, the vast majority of the recoveries (87%) are of birds that have been found dead, but the remaining 13% (179 individuals) are owls that have been recovered alive.

Prior to the bird reported here, the oldest live recovered Barn Owl on record had lived 11½ years. From banding to capture, the Ohio recovered bird had lived 12 years, 2 months--a longevity record for this species in the United States.

Banding records show that Barn Owls have wide dispersal tendencies and are capable of moving great distances. Banded owls have traveled from Ohio to North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Florida; from Pennsylvania to Georgia, Arkansas, and Iowa; from Nebraska to Texas; from Missouri to Georgia; from Wisconsin to Arkansas; from Illinois to Mississippi and South Dakota; from Utah to Mexico; and from New Jersey to North and South Carolina, Alabama, and Florida. Stewart (1952), in his review of banded Barn Owl records, reported one bird had traveled from Ohio to Florida--a distance of 1,075 miles. Two birds I banded in New Jersey have made flights of 1,100 miles--one to Florida, the other to Alabama (Soucy 1980). Stewart also showed that all

significant movements involved young birds in the northern parts of the Barn Owl's range (above 35°N) and that most traveled in a general southward direction.

Although young northern-born Barn Owls have dispersed in all compass directions, I find very few records of birds having moved long distances latitudinally. The owl described here is one of the farthest westward moving birds on record and the first New Jersey born Barn Owl recovered in Ohio.

I wish to thank Danny Bystrak of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Bird Banding Laboratory for supplying me with all the recovery records of Barn Owls banded in the United States.

Literature Cited

Soucy, L.J., Jr. 1980. Three long distance recoveries of banded New Jersey Barn Owls. *No. Amer. Bird Bander* 5:97.

Stewart, P.A. 1952. Dispersal, breeding behavior, and longevity of banded Barn Owls in North America. *Auk* 69:227-245.

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COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARDS AND THEIR USEFULNESS TO THE BANDER

Computer Bulletin Boards: What Are They?

Communications is the name of this game. Quite a few banders use computers and those who do could reach other banders with computers via "Bulletin Boards." A "bulletin board," sometimes called a "RBBS" or Remote Bulletin Board System, is a remote computer system one can dial up with a modem. Some of these Bulletin Boards are small, hometown affairs; but there are several very large ones--COMPUSERVE, THE SOURCE, and many others.

Since all major Bulletin Boards operate more or less alike, let me describe a service within COMPUSERVE that can benefit banders. This is a system module called EASYPLEX (the Corporate equivalent is INFOPLEX), or sometimes referred to as "EMAIL." In order to use COMPUSERVE, you must become a member. Most computer stores sell a so-called "start-up kit." In that kit you will get a temporary membership number, which is an Identification Number that identifies you, the member, not only to the Bulletin Board but also to other members who would want to contact you. Additionally, you get a temporary password, which you must change immediately when logging on the system for the first time. And, you get a list of phone numbers from which you must pick the access phone number nearest your computer location. You will get the latest instruction on how to reach the various modules within that system and there is a long list of those, ranging from electronic shopping to reference material on every subject under the sun. Corporations and government entities frequently use COMPUSERVE as their communications medium. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is one of them.

Equipment Your Computer Must Have

In order to use a Bulletin Board, your computer must be equipped with a modem. This is generally a board inside your computer (but it can also be an external model) that works with your particular brand of computer. The larger Bulletin Boards aren't particular about what sort of computer you have. You can reach them even from a terminal (without a computer attached) if need be, but that's really doing it the hard way. Modems come in various configurations pertaining to speed (300, 1200 or 2400 baud (characters per second times 10) speeds are popular) and if you want one that automaticlaly dials, you need to make sure your modem is "Hayes" compatible (but it can be any brand name).

You also need a communications program to drive your modem and interact with your computer. An excellent shareware (which is like public domain, but copyrighted and the owners ask for money after the fact, usually a small amount) modem program is PROCOMM (Datastorm Technologies, Inc.). Commercial packages are, of course, also available. These are not necessarily better but they are a lot more expensive.

Cost Effectiveness of Use

A Bulletin Board such as COMPUSERVE is only cost effective if your town has a direct connection where the phone call would come under local rates. If the access number is in another town, or if switching service numbers are used (e.g., via TYMNET or TELENET), then the call costs money. To use COMPUSERVE after peak daytime

hours costs little, provided you prepare your messages in advance. When I need to send mail to someone, I first type it up and save it to a file, and then I call the Board, and upload my file to the Board. Similarly, I download any incoming messages and print them out after I've hung up. In this way, my usage is a few minutes here and a few minutes there. Of course, if you want to use other services, you will be paying for that pleasure.

I check the Board twice a month; more often if I know the respondent may have incoming mail for me. Using the Board is, in any event, much cheaper than a long-distance phone call and I recommend you investigate this if you have a modem in your computer and your regular phone bills tend to be heavy.

My COMPUSERVE Identification Number is: 74116,3450 (the comma is part of the number).

Fred S. Schaeffer
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Preventing Mammal Use at Hanging Feeders

Banders who capture birds at feeding stations sometimes find it advantageous to use wire strung between trees, or other supports, from which to hand feeders or traps. Such food sources may soon attract some assortment of raccoons, squirrels, or other mammals whose intervention can disrupt the feeding and banding operations.

To counteract such mammals, I have seen people: 1) use metal baffles on the wire which may or may not work, but in any event appear unsightly; 2) use tubing or spools strung on the wire to provide unsure footing for the intruder; or 3) wrap the supporting tree with aluminum flashing to attempt to limit access to the strung wire. All of these methods do have drawbacks of one sort or another.

Serendipitously, I have found a simple way to discourage mammal access to hanging feeders. It employs the advantageous use of gravity.

Most people who string a line from tree to tree or pole to pole do it by trying to keep the line as horizontal as possible. This works to the intruder's advantage. A horizontal line is easily walked on the topside by many squirrels, or can be traversed on the underside by squirrels, raccoons and opossums that simply hang on and in a "hand-over-hand" fashion with their feet, progress out on the wire to the suspended feeder. To some extent, the top-walking can be discouraged but not totally eliminated by using fine-diameter, high-strength wire or cord. Such an approach, however, usually does not eliminate under-walking of a wire by these mammals.

I have found that by using fine-diameter wire or cord, possessing sufficient strength for the purpose, and inclining the wire at a sufficient angle, as depicted in Figure 1, the footing on the wire can be made so unstable due to gravity that most would-be intruders are discouraged from attempting a walk on or under the wire. A wire angle of about 45 degrees from horizontal is quite sufficient. To achieve it, the supporting hooks or eye screws, which hold the wire, need to be mounted above the height for a horizontal mounting by one-half the distance between the supporting trees, as depicted, at an elevation sufficiently above ground level.

The farther the distance between the supporting trees or poles, the higher the hooks need to be mounted, and the longer the wire needed, to give an adequate angle. Similarly, the higher the mounting of the hooks on trees or poles of fixed distance, the greater the angle achieved. If a 30-to-45 degree angle does not suffice, it may be necessary to increase the angle by raising the hooks and lengthening the wire. Another consideration that needs addressing is the distance from the support to the suspended food source. That distance should be great enough, usually 5-6 feet minimum, to prevent a squirrel from jumping from the support to the food source. That distance can be expanded as needed. Intrusion by flying squirrels may require additional consideration.

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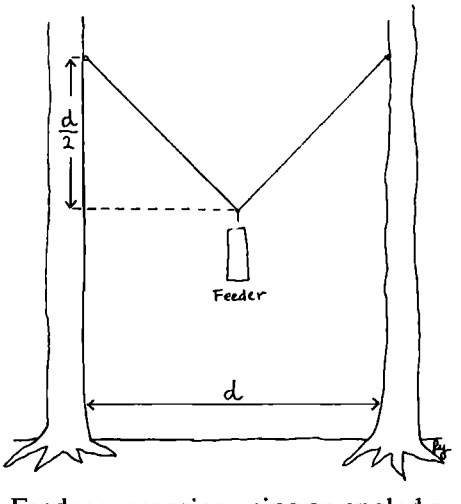

Figure 1. Feeder suspension using an angled support wire to discourage access by quadrupeds.