Western Bird Banding Association
Established 1925

Western Regional News

Western Bird Banding Association
71st Annual Meeting
12-15 September 1996
Camp Kuratli Conference Center
Boring, Oregon

Attendees arriving on Thursday visited a Vaux's Swift migratory roost in downtown Portland for the arrival of the swifts at dusk.

Friday morning's birding trip to sites on Mt. Hood National Forest left at 6:45 to return after lunch in time for a board meeting and a social gathering. After dinner an owling trip departed to call Spotted Owls.

On Saturday another 6:45 departure was needed to reach the fall migration banding site at Mt. Hood. In the afternoon, the following papers were presented:

Evidence for latitudinal segregation of the sexes of wintering Dark-eyed Juncos in western Oregon and Washington.

Bob Altman. Avifauna Northwest, 18000 SE Vogel Road, Boring, Oregon 97009; *Dennis Vroman.* Siskiyou National Forest, 1465 NE 7th Street, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526; *Eugene Kridler.* 951 E. Oak Street, Sequim, Washington 98392

Data from four banding stations in the valleys of western Oregon and Washington were analyzed over several years to assess the sexual composition of wintering Dark-eyed Juncos. This preliminary analysis used hood coloration to separate males from females; future analysis will combine wing length with hood coloration. Capture data (new bandings and returns) were analyzed for the winter period (December through February) when movements are minimal, and also for the entire period from October through April which includes spring and fall migration. A distinct latitudinal cline existed during both winter and winter/migration periods with the highest percentage of males (66 and 65, respectively) at the northernmost station, and the lowest percent (30 and 31, respectively) at the southernmost station. The other two stations were consistent with the latitudinal pattern, a higher percentage of males at the northernmost station. These results are similar to those reported for Dark-eyed Juncos in eastern and central North America.

The effects of mist-netting frequency on capture rates at MAPS stations.

Kenneth M. Burton and *David F. DeSante.* The Institute for Bird Populations, P.O. Box 1346, Point Reyes Station, California 94956

Data from the Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) Program were analyzed to evaluate the effect of frequency of operation (number of days per 10-day period) of mist nets at MAPS stations on capture rates of adult and young birds. A negative relationship existed between netting frequency and the number of individual (new) adult birds captured per unit effort: this demonstrates saturation of effort. There also was a negative relationship between netting frequency and the rate of capture of adults (including recaptures): this suggests that net avoidance by adult birds can be an important consideration at higher frequencies. With regard to young birds, however, netting frequency had no

effect on either type of capture rate. These results indicate that data from stations run at high frequencies will produce inflated productivity indices by lowering capture rates of adults but not of young. Thus, when pooling data from stations operated at differing frequencies for large-scale demographic monitoring, the data must be adjusted to control for frequency.

Tern and skimmer banding at Bolsa Chica: results and future studies.

Charles T. Collins. Department of Biological Sciences, California State University, Long Beach, California 90840.

Since 1985, my students and volunteer banders have banded large numbers of Elegant, Caspian, Least, and Forster's terns and Black Skimmers at the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve near Huntington Beach, California. Several of these species have been given color bands, of several types, to learn more about colony fidelity and survival. This has been particularly effective in the case of the Black Skimmer, and has led to detailed analysis of wintering sites, site fidelity, and early survival. It has been least effective in the case of Caspian Terns which show low nesting colony fidelity. This will be examined further in the coming years.

Weights and fat scores of Golden-crowned Sparrows at feeders and natural foraging sites

Joe Engler. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, Ridgefield, Washington 98642; *Bob Altman.* Avifauna Northwest, 18000 SE Vogel Road, Boring, Oregon 97009.

Golden-crowned Sparrows were captured and banded during fall migration, winter, and spring migration periods. Trapping was conducted during morning and afternoon sessions at a natural foraging site and a feeder site. Standard data were collected with emphasis on weights and fat scores. Weight and fat scores were similar at both sites during the fall and winter, and showed an expected trend to increase during the afternoon period. The feeder site exhibited slightly higher scores during the spring. However, daily changes in spring weight and fat scores showed a reverse trend at the feeder site by decreasing in the afternoon. Preliminary analysis of wing lengths indicate that there may be a difference in sex composition at the two sites.

Capture, banding, and color banding of the Northern Spotted Owl.

Ron Gaines. Environmental Services Northwest, Inc., P.O. Box 866, Vancouver, Washington 98666.

Numerous studies conducted by federal and state agencies and private groups have been implemented throughout the Pacific Northwest to gain a better understanding of the life history of the Northern Spotted Owl. Utilizing colored leg bands, researchers minimize the need to recapture individual owls for identification purposes. The success of these studies is largely due to the Northern Spotted Owl's sedentary nature, willingness to respond during the day, and tolerant behavior. The methods and techniques utilized to study the Northern Spotted Owl may, therefore, be of limited use in studying other species, especially owls.

Interannual movements of Snowy Plovers banded on the south-central Oregon coast 1990-1996.

Mark Stern and *Carole Hallett.* Oregon Natural Heritage Program, 821 SE 14th Street, Portland, Oregon 97214.

Between 1990-1996 we trapped and uniquely color-marked 89 adult plovers (61 males and 28 females) and color-marked 499 pre-fledged chicks at nesting sites on the south-central Oregon coast. Approximately 61% of marked males and 49% of marked adult females demonstrated site fidelity to the previous years' nesting area, including those adults observed at more than one site within a season. Only 17% of the fledged hatching-year birds returned to their natal area the following season compared to 28% that were sighted elsewhere. Some adult and hatching-year birds dispersed to breeding sites in California, the northern Oregon coast, and at Willapa Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Washington. We also report on within season movement of plovers among distant breeding locations, and the sightings of plovers originally banded in eastern Oregon in 1988-89 on the Oregon coast.

Fall migration banding of landbirds at Creamer's Field, Fairbanks, Alaska: 1992-1995.

T.H. Pogson and *A.M. Barber*. Alaska Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 80505, Fairbanks, Alaska 99708.

During the fall migrations of 1992-1995, we captured 12,374 birds of 46 species during a total of 209 days of banding (46-58 days/fall), accumulating 48,046 net hours (6,065-14,122 nh/fall). The primary objectives of our study are to describe the timing, intensity, demography, and interannual variation of landbird movements, breeding, dispersal, and molt using constant effort mist netting and banding. In order of decreasing abundance, the most abundant species captured include: Yellow-rumped and Orange-crowned warblers, American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Lincoln's Sparrow, Wilson's and Yellow warblers, Swainson's Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Savannah Sparrow, American Robin, Alder Flycatcher, Blackpoll Warbler, White-crowned Sparrow, Common Redpoll, Black-capped Chickadee, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Northern Waterthrush, Hammond's Flycatcher, and Fox Sparrow. These 20 species comprise 98.7% of the total number of birds captured. Most of the birds captured (84% of individuals, 71% of species) were long-distance migrants, while the remainder were short-distance migrants or residents. Between 1,797 and 4,370 birds were captured each fall, and between 76 and 90% of these were hatching-year birds. In 1993, the lowest percentage of HY birds captured coincided with the lowest capture rate (12.9 birds/100 nh), suggesting that the number of birds captured each fall is correlated with, or even determined by, the number of hatching-year birds captured. The capture rate in 1992 (43.8 birds/100 nh) was highest followed by the capture rates in 1995 (30.6 birds/100 nh) and 1994 (25.5 birds/100 nh). Preliminary analysis suggest total rainfall during June and July (the breeding season) may be a strong predictor of the capture rate of birds in fall.

Migratory and winter populations of White-crowned Sparrow in the Rogue River Valley near Grants Pass, Oregon.

Dennis P. Vroman. 269 Shetland Drive, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

White-crowned Sparrows *(Zonotrichia leucophrys)* are found during the migratory and winter periods in the Rogue River Valley. Two races occur: Puget Sound White-crowned Sparrow *(Z. l. pugetensis)* and Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow *(Z.l. gambelli)*. Sparrows were captured by mist nets or ground traps between fall 1989 and spring 1992 at 8 different banding locations. Capture data was divided into bi-monthly periods starting with second part of September to first part of May. Puget Sound race captures were found to exceed Gambel's race by 1.75 during the capture period. The bi-monthly capture data provided strong indications of a spring migration through the Rogue River Valley by both races, but not a fall migration. Data indicate that the Puget Sound race migration peaks in the first part of April and that the Gambel's race peaks in the second part of April. Bi-monthly recapture data indicate that both species winter in the Rogue River Valley.

Breeding birds in oak woodland habitats of the Willamette Valley, Oregon 1994-1996.

Mark Stern, Joan Hagar, and *Ginny Rosenberg*. Oregon Natural Heritage Program, 821 SE 14th Street, Portland, Oregon 97214.

We censused the breeding birds in oak woodland habitats at 9 sites in the Willamette Valley of western Oregon 1994-1996. Species present in order of abundance were: Spotted Towhee, Western Wood-Pewee, Orange-crowned Warbler, American Robin, Black-capped Chickadee, House Wren, European Starling, Swainson's Thrush, Dark-eyed Junco, Black-headed Grosbeak, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown-headed Cowbird, Brown Creeper, Purple Finch, and Bewick's Wren. We attribute differences in avian abundance, diversity and richness among the 9 sites to differences in stand structure and composition. In general, oak stands that included Douglas fir, and/or big leaf maple supported higher diversity and more Neotropical migrants than did monotypic stands of Oregon white oak. Nonetheless, there was a core group of 4 species that appeared to be generalist within oak communities, occurring at all sites: Spotted Towhee, Western Wood -Pewee, White-breasted Nuthatch and Brown-headed Cowbird. At one of the study sites, Sauvie Island, we operated a

constant-effort mist-netting station. We captured 647 individuals, with 7 species comprising 75% of all captures: Song Sparrow (20%), House Wren (11%), Common Bushtit (10%), Common Yellowthroat (10%), Black-capped Chickadee (9%), Bewick's Wren (8%), and Northern Oriole (7%).

Raptor migration monitoring at Bonney Butte, Oregon.

Jennifer Whitford. Mt. Hood National Forest, Gresham, Oregon 97030.

Hawkwatch International, Inc. (HWI) is a member-based, non-profit organization founded in 1986. HWI works to monitor and preserve birds of prey, their habitats, and our environment through scientific research, education, and conservation action. HWI is the only organization conducting long-term raptor population research at a network of sites across western North America. During fall migration, HWI staffs a variety of sites counting, trapping, and banding raptors. One such site was established in 1994 at Bonney Butte on the Mt. Hood National Forest. During the months of September and October, observers counted 2,255 raptors of 16 species. The most common species (over 72% of the detections) were Sharp-shinned Hawks (n=858), Red-tailed Hawks (n=516), and Cooper"s Hawks (n=280). Similar species composition and numbers were recorded in 1995. However, far fewer immature Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper's Hawks, and Red-tailed Hawks were counted in 1995 than in 1994, indicating that these species may have had poorer breeding success in 1995 than in 1994.

— — — — — — —

At the evening business meeting, the following slate of officers was elected:

President, Dennis P. Vroman
Ist Vice president, Stephanie Jones
2nd Vice President, Catherine I. Sandell
Secretary, Jim Steele
Treasurer, Kenneth Burton
Director (1997), Bob Altman
Director (1998), Ken Voget
Immediate Past President, Barbara A. Carlson.

Steve Dowlan (Bureau of Land Management, Salem District, Cascades Resource Area, Salem, Oregon 97306) gave the feature presentation on:

The Breeding Status and Distribution of Harlequin Ducks in Oregon

The breeding status of Harlequin Ducks *(Histrionicus histrionicus)* in western Oregon has remained uncertain since Gabrielson and Jewett listed three definite breeding records in the 1940 publication of "Birds of Oregon." Despite this paucity of confirmed breeding records, the authors concluded their entry on breeding records of the "western" Harlequien Duck *(H. histronicus pacificus)* in Oregon by stating "Undoubtedly, this beautiful little inhabitant of the mountain streams nests through the Cascades in suitable localities and more records will be procured as the number of bird students increases."

Prior to 1993, only 5 nests had yet been found in the Oregon Cascades, though brood sightings had been reported from at least 20 streams from Douglas to Multnomah Counties. Harlequin Duck was listed as "Federal Candidate Species, Category 2" for protection under the Federal Endangered Species Act in November, 1991. In response, biologists and government agencies from throughout the United States and Canada formed a working group to share information, address future research needs, and formulate survey protocol.

In March 1993, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife organized a Harlequin Duck Working Group for the state and proposed a comprehensive survey effort for northwest Oregon which would focus on investigating streams for which few or no records existed, as well as streams with previous sightings. A total of 281 observations were recorded for 1993 in the final report for this study. The 1993 survey efforts proved that Harlequin Ducks are more widespread and numerous than land-management agencies had previously thought. The positive results of these surveys in streams with few or no previous recorded sightings demonstrated that an intensive survey effort may be necessary just to establish presence.

In 1994, emphasis shifted from the search for presence of Harlequins on new streams to acquiring data on the reproductive ecology of the species. Fifteen hens were marked with radio transmitters, and tracking efforts resulted in the location of 4 nests on 3 streams. The radio-telemetry project continued in 1995, and 27 hens and 6 drakes were marked between late March and late May on 9 streams. Sixteen nests were located using radio-telemetry on 7 streams. Eighteen adults of both sexes and 29 young birds from 9 broods were marked with colored bands (plastic gray band with a black alpha-numeric code, i.e. E6, A7, etc.). Three of the broods captured for banding were from hens which had not been marked or tracked.

The number of Harlequin Duck nests found in Oregon now stands at 29, six times the number known prior to 1993. Observations of Harlequin Ducks on breeding streams are scattered throughout a number of federal, state, and private agencies, and research and survey projects have been carried out by several agencies and organizations as well. Although observations of Harlequin Ducks on Oregon streams are still an uncommon and thrilling sight, the breeding status and distribution of the "Lords and Ladies" of Oregon's mountain streams is no longer the great mystery that it was thought to be only five years ago.

On Sunday morning the participants chose between two trips to Mt. Hood and the Columbia Gorge or Bonney Butte for hawk monitoring and banding.

WBBA and the 55 participants thank the organizing committee—*Bob Altman, Mike Blocker, Darlene Philpoff, Ellen Stevenson*—and cooperating agencies: USFWS, Region 1, Nongame Migratory birds; Mt. Hood NF; BLM, Portland and Oregon Washington Partners in Flight for all their efforts.

MEETING T-SHIRTS STILL AVAILABLE

Send check for $13 each to

Bob Altman

18000 SE Vogel Rd.

Boring, OR 97009

1997

WBBA Annual Meeting Las Vegas, Nevada in October