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Western Regional News

Klamath Bird Observatory Banding In 2008

Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO) continued its comprehensive, long-term bird monitoring program in the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion of northern California and southern Oregon in 2008 in pursuit of our mission to advance bird and habitat conservation through science, education, and partnerships. This report provides a brief summary of 2008 banding efforts which included tissue sampling, technical training, nocturnal bioacoustical monitoring, and banding-associated outreach and education efforts.

KBO operated 17 banding stations and a single one-day banding public demonstration. We continued efforts at 11 stations that have been operated for 10 or more consecutive years, two sites operated six to seven years, and four sites operated three or fewer years. Combined capture totals from 322 banding efforts at 18 locations totaled 11,101 birds of 98 species captured during 16,539.4 net hours.

The ten most numerous captured species were Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco (730), Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler (621), Song Sparrow (477), Orange-crowned Warbler (434), Hermit Thrush (426), Purple Finch (263), Spotted Towhee (262), Yellow Warbler (262), Swainson's Thrush (256), and Fox Sparrow (244). Unusual species captured (all considered transient migrants in our area)

included Chestnut-sided Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Hooded Warbler, and Indigo Bunting. Several banded individuals of year-round resident species were captured at one of the three Rogue Valley sites along a ca. 14-mile stretch of Bear Creek (a tributary of the Rogue River) and subsequently recaptured at another of the three. These species included Downy Woodpecker, Bewick's Wren, Black-capped Chickadee, Song Sparrow, and Spotted Towhee.

Since 1999, KBO has contributed tissue samples to the UCLA Conservation Genetics Research Center for use in molecular genetic data analysis, international genetic material repository, and avian pathogen monitoring and research. In 2008, we collected 3,500 feather samples and 1,000 cloacal swab samples. In addition, we initiated a study of regional altitudinal migration using stable isotopes using paired feather and claw tissue for which 229 samples were collected.

In August, KBO expanded the scope of our regional collaboration with the Redwood Sciences Laboratory, establishing bioacoustical monitoring stations, implemented in cooperation with the Carnegie Museum of Natural History's Powdermill Nature Reserve. The recording devices were operated nightly at two of our banding sites during fall migration. The Redwood Sciences Laboratory established recording devices at three sites in Trinity and Humboldt counties within the Klamath

Bird Monitoring Network. The recording devices were operated mid-August through early-November, inclusive of the fall landbird migration.

KBO's bird banding internship program is an integral part of our monitoring program, providing technical training in bird monitoring techniques for students and biologists. Fifteen intern students received banding training, including eight international students from Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, and Spain. Eleven of our interns were subsequently North American Banding Council-evaluated and certified at the Bander level, with one also certified at the Bander Trainer level. Visiting biologists and volunteers received banding techniques training in the field, totaling 33 person days. In a celebration of community involvement, KBO welcomed the contributions of several local volunteers who assisted at Ashland-area stations while receiving training in banding skills for 23 person days.

A banding techniques workshop was presented in July for Klamath Bird Monitoring Network cooperators and other regional researchers at KBO's Upper Klamath Lake Field Station, attended by 22 individuals. Participants received instruction in advanced landbird ageing and sexing techniques, standard biometrics, mist net use and maintenance, outreach and education communication skills, and general field safety principles.

Bird banding provides a unique opportunity to educate the public and students about birds, their environment, and the connection between science and conservation. KBO continued to offer academic and public outreach opportunities. Over 1,300 people visited our banding sites during field trips, and bird-walks. Banding sites were visited by 1,190 students and teachers from regional schools, including K-12 grade and college students.

Many thanks are due to all the individuals and organizations that helped make 2008 a great success for our banding project. Data resulting from these efforts are contributed to several databases

including the USGS North American Bird Banding Laboratory, the Institute for Bird Populations' Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship program, the Klamath Bird Monitoring Network, Landbird Monitoring Network of the Americas, University of California, Los Angeles Center for Tropical Research's Population, Structure, and Conservation of Neotropical Migrant Birds program, and KBO education, outreach, and research.

These efforts were made possible through support from the Ashland Rotary Club, Ashland School District and the Willow Wind Community Learning Center, Carnegie Museum of Natural History Powdermill Nature Reserve, Carpenter Foundation, City of Ashland Parks and Recreation Department and the North Mountain Park Nature Center, City of Medford, Evergreen State College, Harriman Rural Fire District, Healy Foundation, Jefferson Nature Center, JiJi Foundation, Klamath County, MJ Murdock Charitable Trust, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Oregon Audubon Council, PacifiCorp, PRBO Conservation Science, Rogue Valley Audubon Society, Southern Oregon University, USDA Fremont/Winema, Klamath, Lassen, and Rogue River/Siskiyou National Forests, USDI Bureau of Land Management Lakeview and Medford Districts, USDI Bureau of Reclamation, USDI National Park Service Oregon Caves National Monument, Klamath Network, and Park Flight Program, USDI Fish and Wildlife Service Region 1 Non-game Landbird Program and Klamath Basin Refuge Complex, West Family Foundation, Wildlife Images, and KBO members and private sector contributors. We especially thank Kari Moser of the Fremont/Winema National Forests, and Dave Mauser and Doug Damberg of USDI Fish and Wildlife Service Klamath Basin Refuge Complex for their logistical assistance.

*Robert I. Frey, Jaime L. Stephens,
and John D. Alexander*