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## Recent Literature

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### BANDING HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHIES

**In memoriam: Bill Mathews, 1929-2012.** C. S. Houston. 2013. *Blue Jay* 71:106-107. 863 University Dr., Saskatoon, SK S7N 0J8 (Brief biography of bander of 11,296 birds by 1960, Saskatchewan's third highest total to that date. Noteworthy totals included 3804 Common Redpolls, 2176 Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Juncos and 746 White-throated Sparrows. Local recaptures included several American Robins and Common Redpolls. Recoveries included Mallard, Northern Pintail and Canvasback in Arkansas, Georgia, Manitoba and South Dakota. He and Maurice G. Street each banded one of two Whip-poor-will chicks as part of the documentation of Saskatchewan's first known nest.) MKM

### EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES

**Assessing mortality of African vultures using wing tags and GSM-GPS transmitters.** C. J. Kendall and M. Z. Varani. 2002. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:135-140. 113E Eno Hall, Princeton Univ., Princeton, NJ 08540 (Four [two Lappet-faced and two White-backed] of 17 GSM-GPS-tagged vultures were confirmed dead within a year of attachment in Kenya, in comparison with four of 78 vultures wing-tagged between 2004 and 2009 found within six years of attachment. The vultures were trapped in noose grids in a line of carcasses. Between 2006 and 2009, 26 of the wing-tagged birds were resighted alive, with 71 sightings. Poisoning was suspected as the main cause of death, as confirmed in four specimens. White-backed and Rueppell's vultures were the primary species wing-tagged, with smaller numbers of Lappet-faced Vultures. The study confirmed that these vultures use large home ranges, including unprotected areas. ) MKM

**Geolocators on raptors: advantages and limitations of a new tracking technology.** S. Weidensaul. 2012. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:141-144. 778 Schwartz Valley Rd., Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972 (Brief evaluation of usefulness of light-sensing geolocators for studying raptors,

especially species too small for satellite tags. After describing the equipment and its use briefly, advantages outlined include size, longevity, relatively low cost, relative longevity of storage capacity, and advantages in some cases over satellite transmitters. An example of 20 geolocators helping to provide details on Lesser Kestrel wintering ranges in a single year that 30 years of breeding range banding had failed to provide. Disadvantages were from limitations on the scale of location data generated, temporal-geographical limitations on technological functioning and effects of shading and cavity-use on data generation, and limitations posed by the need to recover the equipment to obtain the data. Protecting the equipment from effects of weather and damage from raptor bills is also discussed. Methods of avoiding potential physical damage to study species are also considered.) MKM

**Use of a net gun to safely capture Short-eared Owls in mid-flight from a helicopter.** T.L. Booms, L.S. Parrett and M.A. Keech. 2012. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:208-211. Alaska Dept. Fish & Game, Wildl. Diversity Progr., 1300 College Rd., Fairbanks, AK 99701 (After several other methods of capturing Short-eared Owls in areas of Alaska with few roads, 18 owls were captured in 26 nets fired at them in helicopters with no documented injuries. Twelve owls were fitted with transmitters, one of which migrated 370 km in 22 days, when the signal ceased. The other 11 were alive and active at least ten weeks after capture, some flying up to 5500 km. Discernible effects of net-capture in flight were primarily bent tail feathers, with some other feather damage or loss and possible wing strain. Costs and methods of avoiding or minimizing injuries are discussed.) MKM

**New technology is rapidly changing the way birds are studied.** A. Murray. 2012. *Wandering Tattler* 36(1):3-4. 4992 Stevens Ln., Delta, BC V4M 1P1 (Summary of several examples of details of migratory routes, habitats and behavior revealed by banding and its increasingly refined equipment, such as geolocators, satellite transmitters and increasingly lighter transmitters.) MKM

## IDENTIFICATION, MOLTS, PLUMAGES, WEIGHTS AND MEASUREMENTS

**Nikon photo quiz.** W. D'Anna. 2012. *OFO* [Ontario Field Ornithologists] *News* 30(2):15-16. c/o Ont. Field Ornithol., Box 116, Stn. F, Toronto, ON M4Y 2L4 (Review of features distinguishing juvenile Le Conte's Sparrow from other emberizid sparrows and non-emberizid conical-billed birds that occur in Ontario.) MKM

## NORTH AMERICAN BIRD BANDING

**Autumn migration ecology of the Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*) in northern Montana.** G.G. Frye. 2012. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:177-183. Dept. Biol. Sci., Boise State Univ., Boise, ID 83725 (Between 2001 and 2006, 688 saw-whet owls were captured in mist nets and banded near Choteau, MT, between 30 Aug and 31 Oct. A table lists total owls banded, percent HY, owls caught per hour and owls caught per net-hour each year. Charts show that capture rates peaked between mid-September and early October each year, but varied greatly between years, as did age ratios. No effects of weather variables were noted, but capture rates fell about 2% for every 10% increase in moon illumination. Two AB-banded owls were among those captured by Frye in Montana; one banded by him was found dead in southern MT, another recaptured 3,322 km east in MA.) MKM

**Tree Swallow research at Long Point.** S. Mackenzie. 2012. *BirdWatch Canada* 60:22. Bird Studies Canada, Box 160, Port Rowan, ON N0E 1M0 (Summary of long-term research started by David Hussell and Geoff Holroyd at Long Point, ON, in 1963 and involving research of several people at several nearby sites subsequently. Highlights include studies of reproductive success in relation to food abundance and the influence of climate change on Tree Swallow breeding and food dynamics, including collaborative investigations across the hemisphere. Nearly 30,000 swallows have been banded by 200 field workers in this project to date, with geolocators recently added by Ryan Norris, the current project coordinator.) MKM

**Winter occurrence of three Merlin subspecies in southwestern Idaho, U.S.A.** B.A. Haak. 2012. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:220-223. Idaho Dept. Fish & Game, Southwest Region, 3101 S. Powerline Rd., Nampa, ID 83686 (The proportion of 80 Merlins identified to each of three races by sight in the Boise River Valley during four winters corresponded to those of 60 captured in hoop, dhogaza and bal-chatri traps, with 68.9% Taiga, 23.7% Black and 7.4% Richardson's. Similarly, captured Merlins showed approximately the same proportion of females [74%] and males [26%] that could be identified to gender by sight alone. About half of 45 females captured were in juvenile plumage, while 60% of males were adults.) MKM

**Bathing and drinking behavior of wintering Merlins.** B.A. Haak and J.B. Buchanan. 2012. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:224-226. Idaho Dept. Fish & Game, Southwest Region, 3101 S. Powerline Rd., Nampa, ID 83686 (Radio-tags on a Black Merlin and a Taiga Merlin in Idaho enabled Haak to observe and document details of both drinking and bathing behavior in the former and bathing in the latter, as well as behavior before and after these activities. These constituted two of the first four documented instances of these behaviors in the wild in this species.) MKM

**Last Mountain Bird Observatory –spring 2012.** A.R. Smith. 2012. *Nature Views* 171:4. 318-113<sup>th</sup> St. W., Saskatoon, SK S7N 2L2 (During the 22<sup>nd</sup> consecutive spring of banding coverage at Last Mountain Lake, SK, 616 new birds of 53 species were captured and banded, and 52 birds of 12 species returned at least one year after banding. A 2003-banded Common Grackle was at least nine years, 10 months old.) MKM

**Cape Breton Piping Plover among Bahamas-bound 'snowbirds.'** Anonymous. 2010. *Bird Studies Canada Latest News* 3 Dec. 2010:1-2. c/o Box 160, Port Rowan, ON N0E 1M0. (A colored-banded plover seen on a Nova Scotia beach in May 2010 was one of 57 banded in Jan 2010 in the Bahamas. One nest of the Cape Breton-banded plover was washed out in a rain storm, but two young fledged from a second nest. Three others of the 57 plovers banded in the Bahamas were also

observed in Atlantic Canada, and the Cape Breton bird and two of the others were re-sighted in the Bahamas again in Nov 2010.) MKM

**Animal and plant sightings.** J.D. McAskill. 2010. *Island Naturalist* 197:7-10. 368 Brazel Rd., Charlottetown, PE C1A 7J8 (Banding helped document Prince Edward Island's tenth Yellow-breasted Chat at Cameron's Island Banding Station on 21 Oct 2010 [photograph on p. 5]. A wing-tagged Canada Goose and a wing-tagged Ring-billed Gull are also mentioned, but their origins apparently not known.) MKM

**Third wild-hatched California Condor chick visually confirmed in July.** Anonymous. 2012. *Wingspan* 21(2):12. Box 6125, 322 Percival Hall, West Virginia Univ., Morgantown, WV 26506-6125. ("Visible confirmation" was confirmed in July 2012 that a wild-hatched condor chick was in Grand Canyon National Park, the third wild condor chick produced by the Utah-Arizona flock in 2012 and the 18<sup>th</sup> hatched in the wild since condors were introduced into Arizona in 1966.) MKM

**Animal and plant sightings.** J.D. McAskill. 2010. *Island Naturalist* 196:11-15. 368 Brazel Rd., Charlottetown, PE C1A 7J8 (A wing-tagged Ring-billed Gull found injured at Covehead Bay PE in July 2010 had been tagged at Shrewsbury Bay, MA, in Oct. 2009.) MKM

**Adventures with White-winged Scoters.** C.S. Houston. 2013. *Blue Jay* 71:78-80. 863 University Dr., Saskatoon, SK S7N 0J8 (Accounts of banding nesting scoters by Houston and companions at York Lake in 1946, Last Mountain Lake in the 1950s and Redberry Lake from 1960-1983, including the catching of two females by hand by Joe Schmidt while leaping up. Houston's efforts included collaboration with Pat Brown and Pat Kehoe on thesis studies, yielded the five oldest longevity records to date and numerous other recaptures.) MKM

**Eyes on IBAs seventh in a series Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park IBA.** E. Campbell. 2013. *Nature Alberta* 42(4):15-16. c/o Nature Alberta, 11759 Groat Rd., Edmonton, AB T5M 3K6 (Brief account of bird migration at Lesser Slave Lake and

the work of its bird observatory, where Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers constitute the most-banded species.) MKM

**Coyote scavenges road-killed Burrowing Owl in British Columbia.** R.W. Campbell. 2011. *Wildlife Afield* 8:108-110. 2511 Kilgory Pl., Victoria, BC V8N 1J6 (Regular and color-bands on the Burrowing Owl carcass indicated that it was hatched and banded in a natural nest about 1 km from where it was killed near Quilchena, BC, and that its father was a bird "from a previous year", the mother a captive-bred bird.) MKM

**Ontario Bird Records Committee report for 2011.** M. H. Cranford. 2012. *Ontario Birds* 30:66-93. 206-2437 Hurontario St., Mississauga, ON L5A 2G4 (Details are outlined for reports of 133 records of extralimital bird occurrences in Ontario, with 109 [82%] accepted. Acceptance of *Pyrrhuloxia* brings the Ontario list to 487. Although banding is not mentioned specifically, photographs of hand-held Blue Grosbeak and Orchard Oriole at Thunder Cape Bird Observatory suggest that these birds were caught during banding efforts.) MKM

**Recent history of Trumpeter Swans in Ontario and Quebec and their status in 2010-2011.** H. Lumsden, R. Kingdom, B. Kingdom, K. Intini and J. Kee. 2012. *Ontario Birds* 30:109-119. 144 Hillview Rd., Aurora, ON L4G 2M5 (Although loss of wing-tags has complicated estimates of survival rates of some captive-produced, released swans in Ontario, Quebec and adjacent U.S. states, they have helped document nesting successes in these programs, as well as documenting dispersal. Patagial-tagged and neck-banded Trumpeter Swans observed in Ontario have come from considerable distances within the province, as well as from Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, Quebec, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Ontario-tagged birds have also been seen wintering in Minnesota and Wisconsin.) MKM

**Which were the best years for Mountain Bluebirds on Calgary area bluebird trails? Comparison statistics 1973-2011.** D. Stiles. 2012. *Nature Alberta* 42(3):24-29. 20 Lake Wapta Rise, SE, Calgary, AB T2J 2M9 (A Tree Swallow banded in DeWinton, AB, was recovered in NE in the banding year.) MKM

## NON-NORTH AMERICAN BANDING RESULTS

**Reversed sexual dimorphism and differential prey delivery in Barn Owls (*Tyto alba*).** S. Pande and N. Dahanukar. 2012. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:184-189. Ela Foundation, C-9, Bhosdale Park, Sahakarnagar-2, Pune 411009, India (Both members of seven pairs of Barn Owls were captured at nests around Pune, India, in 2004 and 2005 and the female of each pair was banded. Reversed sexual dimorphism was documented in bill length, tarsal length, wing chord, tail length and mass, and females were found to bring larger prey to their nests than their mates, with males bringing prey to nests more often than females.) MKM

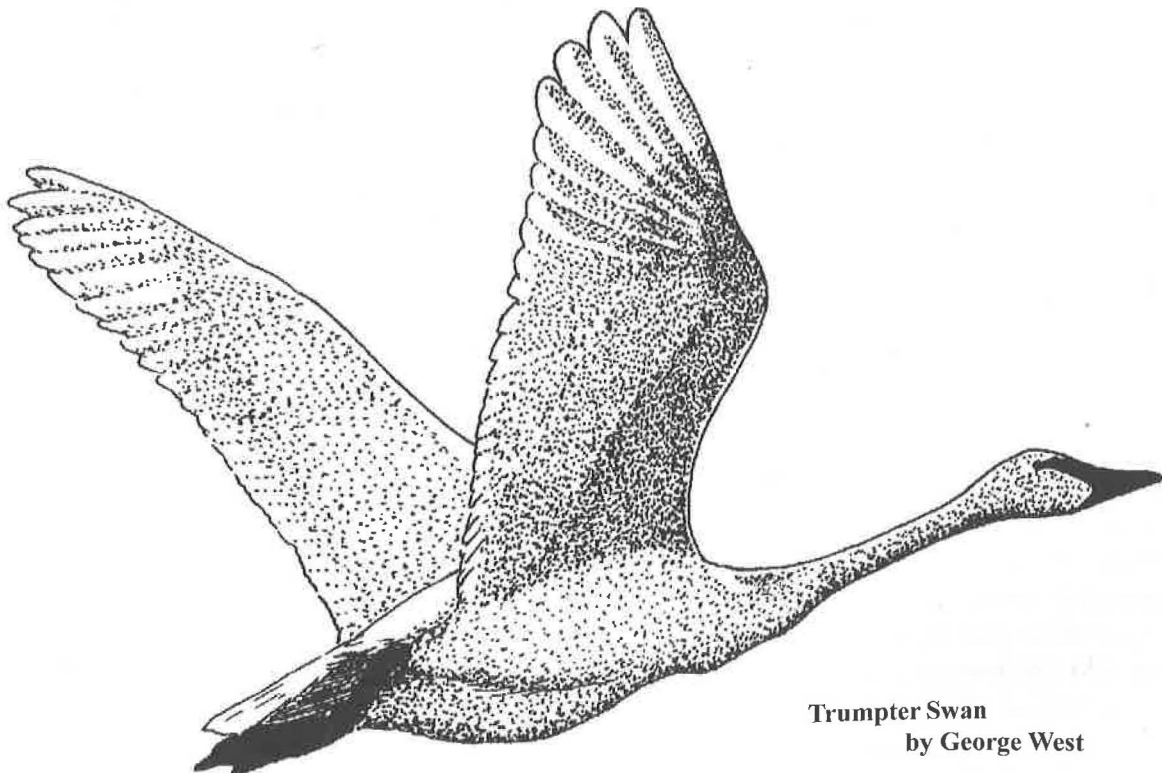
**First polygynous trio of Bearded Vultures (*Gypaetus barbatus*).** P. Fasce and L. Fasce. 2012. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:216-219. Via G. d'Annunzio 2/112, 16121, Genova, Italy (Color bands on the female and natural markings on two males in a trio of re-introduced vultures nesting in northern Italy helped document 2008-2011 nesting activities at two nests, including timing and share of nest-building and incubation duties and nesting

success of the first known polygynous trio. A few polyandrous trios have been documented in this species previously.) MKM

**Banded Alaskan Gyrfalcon discovered in Arabian falconry.** T. L. Booms. 2012. *Journal of Raptor Research* 46:226-227. Alaska Dept. Fish & Game, Wild. Diversity Program, 1300 College Rd., Fairbanks, AK 99701 (A nestling female Gyrfalcon banded and color-banded in Alaska in July 2005 was trapped in the Kamchatka Peninsula of Russia that fall and smuggled to the Arabian Peninsula, where it was photographed in captivity in 2011.) MKM

**World's oldest documented wild bird still breeding.** B. Peterjohn. 2013. *Ornithological Newsletter* 213:1. U.S.G.S. Patuxent Wildl. Res. Cent., 12100 Beech Forest Rd., Laurel, MD 20708-4038 ("Wisdom," a Laysan Albatross, banded by Chandler S. Robbins while incubating an egg on Midway Atoll in 1956, successfully hatched another chick in 2013, when at least 62 years old. She has worn out five bands and hatched 30-35 chicks.) MKM

MKM = *Martin K. McNicholl*



Trumpeter Swan  
by George West