PROJECT A.I.U.
A COOPERATIVE BANDING PROJECT FOR ALL BACK YARD BANDERS

By Rebecca Cregar

PURPOSE: This project has two purposes: First, to obtain and tabulate meaningful data needed in research. Second, to provide the smaller banders with an opportunity to work on a project.

NEED: Ornithologists feel there is still much to be learned about the age ratios of migrating birds in different localities. For example, it is known that the proportion of adults to immatures at coastal stations is very low as compared with inland stations. Much more data from many locations is needed to determine a possible difference in migration routes, in timing, or susceptibility to being blown off course. The age ratio is also important in relation to the possible effects of pesticides on bird reproduction.

PROJECT A.I.U. is designed to study the age ratio of migrating birds. The "A" stands for adults, the "I" for immatures, and the "U" for the inevitable unknowns which every bander encounters and are so important to admit.

METHOD: To make the records worthwhile it is necessary to set certain standards so that the results will be comparable. These follow.

In brief, each participant will be asked to age, by checking skull ossification, new birds banded on certain dates. These dates will be six weekends during the fall. Then by placing this data on summary sheets, along with net and trap hours, then sending them to the final compilers, the results can be compared with O.R. reports for the same dates. The summaries can also be analyzed in several different ways.

METHOD OF AGEING: This should be done by James Baird's method. See "Ageing Birds by Skull Ossification by Jim Baird, EBBA NEWS, 1964, Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 162, or EBBA WORKSHOP MANUAL, Vol. 3, 1964.

Each participant will have considerable opportunity to practice this method on both adults and immatures before the PAIU dates. PRACTICE IS WHAT IT TAKES.

DATES FOR 1966 PROJECT A.I.U.:

Sept. 10-11	Sept. 24-25	Oct. 08-09
Sept. 17-18	Oct. 01-02	Oct. 14-15

NOTE: Labor Day weekend has been omitted as many people have family obligations at that time.

METHOD OF RECORDING DATA: Individual record sheets are used as the birds are banded. Results are then placed on a daily summary sheet which

Fig. 1.

OPERATION RECOVERY INDIVIDUAL RECORD SHEET, page ________

All birds on this sheet are (circle one): new bandings repeats returns foreign
banded by permittee no. ________ in the State or Province of ________
at coordinates ____________ in the month of ________, 19__. Bander: ________

Band Number	Species	AOU	Age	Sex	Date	Time	Wing	Fat	Weight

Total

Report form 2.1 (rev. 1961)

indicates total A, I, or U banded for the day as well as a total of A, I, U for each species banded during the project.

1. INDIVIDUAL RECORD SHEET: Use Operation Recovery Form 2.1 (rev.1961). As each bird is banded record the following. (see Fig. 1.)

BAND NUMBER: Check numbers carefully.

A.O.U. NUMBER: Use 3 digits only except: 412.3 hybrid flicker, 467.9 unidentified empidonax, 472.9 yellow palm warbler. Precede all 2 digit A.O.U. numbers by "0".

AGE: If the bird is aged by other than skull ossification, enter "SNO" on each line in addition to "A", "I", or "U".

DATE: Six digits as for Government reports - 09-10-66

TIME: Use 4 digits for hours and minutes. Code to nearest 5 min. (or nearest 15 min. on busy days if closer timing is not practical).

SEX, WING, FAT, AND WEIGHT: This information is not necessary for PAIU, but any bander should try and fill in as much as he is capable of. All information will be used.

2. DAILY SUMMARY OF NEW BIRDS BY SPECIES: (see Fig. 2.)

SPECIES: Species should be listed in A.O.U. order. The number of A,I,U for each species should be tabulated each day. The column to the right will give the age totals for the month in each category for each species. The totals at bottom of sheet will give total age groups of all birds banded for the day. The sum of each of these two tabulations should equal each other as a check.

NOTE: Since most stations will probably record more than 28 species, make a sub-total and carry over to a second sheet.

NET AND TRAP HOURS: A careful record of netting and trapping hours is essential in comparing records between stations and between days.

Net Hours: If nets are left set over night count your time only from sunrise to sunset. If five nets are operated for a twelve-hour day, 5X12 or 60 net hours. Totals for the day may be rounded off to the nearest whole number.

Trap Hours: For timing see net hours. Count the number of traps as follows.

Each single cell	1
Each four cell	4
Each multi or maze	4

Example: 5 single cells, two four cells and three maze traps would total 25 traps x time = trap hours. Each participant should keep an exact record of traps set as this ratio might be changed with experience.

3. WEATHER RECORDS:

Since weather conditions play an important part in migratory activity, a bander's records become more valuable if a weather picture accompanies his banding. Compilers use standard weather maps, but at all

Fig. 2.

PROJECT A. I. U.

Daily summary of new birds by species: Station operator

Address

Species (AOU order)	Month						Permit No.				Long.						Lat.		
Date																		TOTALS	
Age	A	I	U	A	I	U	A	I	U	A	I	U	A	I	U	A	I	U	A	I
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS																				
NET HOURS																				
TRAP HOURS																				

Total individuals _____ Total net hours ____ Total trap hours ____ total species

Assistants:

times specific local information becomes important. Please set up your own weather form and keep it with your permanent records. It takes only a few minutes each day. Note

Sky conditions.
Time of start and ending of precipitation.
Minimum and maximum temperature.
Wind speed (Beaufort scale easy) and direction.
Note any abrupt changes in wind direction with the passage of a cold front or other meteorological phenomenen.

INFORMATION: For additional information please write Miss Rebecca Cregar, 223 Matsonford Rd., Radnor, Pa. 19087. This project and ageing by skull will be a part of the workshop.

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TEACHING CONSERVATION THROUGH BIRD BANDING
Summary by Ted S. Pettit

Many conservation problems, particularly in wildlife, are "people problems". Too many people base their opnions and their actions on emotional thinking rather than on biological research and the findings of that research.

Since they are working with living animals in their natural environment, bird banders have a unique opportunity to teach young people a scientific method of thought that can be applied in many cases to other animals in other situations. Several examples will be given.

Young people should be shown some of the conservation practices now in effect that came about as the result of banding. (Flyway concept of waterfowl management; pesticide-wildlife relationships). Young people should be encouraged to develop their own projects, involving banding, and be given a chance to participate in banding operations.

Banding offers a tremendous opportunity to show young people (and their parents) that things are not always as they seem in nature, and that adequate research must always precede conservation practices.