
Annual Summary of Birds Banded in 2016 in the WBBA Region

The Annual Banding totals for 2016 and the list of Master Banders can be found on the Western Bird Banding Association website <http://www.westernbirdbanding.org/>

In 2016, there were 247,946 birds banded, as reported by 369 Master Bander permits. For the second year, I requested banding records for 2016 from the Bird Banding Laboratory. The only change in protocol was that for 2015 I requested banding records early in the year, while in 2016, I requested banding records in June. In this way, I hopefully picked up banders who were late in submitted their data.

The total number of taxa reported (species, subspecies, races) remain about the same from 2015 (n = 646) to 2016 (n = 648). The total number of birds banded declined from 298,282 in 2015 to 247,178 in 2016. It is always unclear why these numbers go down (or up). There were 397 in 2015 vs 369 reporting Master Banders in 2016. There are a myriad of reasons ranging from bandings not reported, stations did not operate, project ended, and the “go to” explanation, weather and climate (we blame global warming for everything).

You will note a change in the presentation. The Hawaii area has been changed to Pacific Islands, to include the many islands and island chains in the Pacific Ocean. In 2016, this included Midway Islands along with the Hawaiian Islands.

Although the Mexican contingent banded over 12,000 birds, this was 15,000 fewer bird than in 2015. Ironically, all banding areas had a decline in birds banded with the exception of California, which suffered from a historic fifth year of drought. So much for weather/climate.

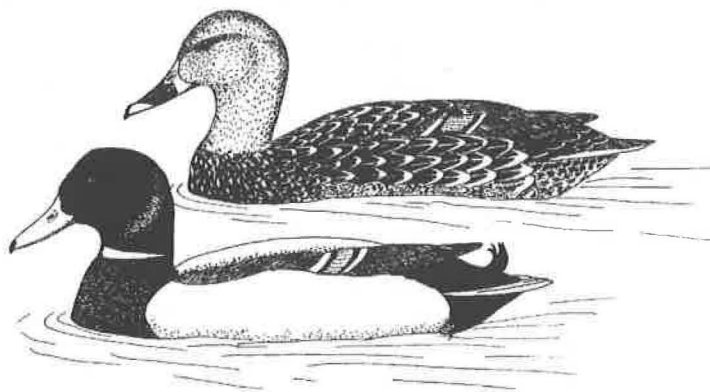
Mallards were the most banded bird; the banding effort here is to help assess the population to set hunting quotas. Tricolored Blackbirds came in second, mostly due to the herculean effort of Robert Meese of UC Davis, who has been studying these birds for many years. He has been studying this declining species, a potential candidate as a California endangered species. Mourning Doves and Mountain Bluebirds came in as close third and fourth. The former is another game bird, and the latter is famous for the “bluebird trail” nest boxes.

It is likely the annual summary of birds banded in Mexico will be presented as a separate report in 2017. Manuel Grosselet ramrods a group of seven banding stations. Along with three U.S. based banders, Mexico will be a separate report. We hope that this will lead to greater interesting bird banding in Mexico.

A number of permits did not have a Master Bander listed. Privacy laws and concerns have made it more difficult to access these names. If you wish or do not wish your and/or your institution to be acknowledged, please contact me.

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Mallard's by George West