

New manual for banders

A new manual for banders has been published. This manual, "Introduction to Bird Banding Techniques," written by Fred Schaeffer, augments the information found in the Bird Banding Manual, Volume II. It emphasizes the need to have a sound study project and covers most of the aspects of banding techniques not found in Volume II (Bird Banding Manual) such as:

- How to set up nets and traps
- Where to set up equipment
- Bird storage and handling
- Station ethics vis-a-vis staff and visitors
- How to hold birds and how to remove them from nets
- Banding paperwork in the field and at home
- Clues to identification, ageing, and sexing
- How to prepare data for analyses and publication
- References to "how to" papers

"Introduction to Bird Banding Techniques" is aimed at the beginning bander but is equally suitable for veterans. The work was reviewed by George M. Jonkel, Chief of the Bird Banding Laboratory, and by Hannah B. Suthers, First Vice-President of EBBA. The author donated the work to EBBA, along with rights to proceeds and royalties.

This book has been printed from typewritten camera copies and measures 8-1/2" x 11". Copies can be obtained from Thomas Mutchler, Box 212x R.D. 1, Monticello, NY 12701. The cost is \$3.50 postpaid.

Vacation and Hospitality Exchange

I am planning to publish a Directory especially for birders, bird banders, and ornithologists who would like to exchange homes or apartments with each other for vacations or hospitality purposes.

Those interested are asked to send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Max Lazar, 55 Grand Ave., Rockville Center, NY 11570.

Request for assistance Eastern Bluebird study

During the spring and summer of 1980, the Muddy Run Ecological Laboratory conducted an Eastern Bluebird banding project at the Muddy Run Project Area, near the towns of Holtwood and Drumore, Lancaster County, PA. Bluebirds were banded with numbered, colored leg bands of either red, yellow, green or blue, in addition to the standard Fish and Wildlife Service leg bands.

Observers of these birds are asked to report such details as sex; exact location; date; time of day; number of bluebirds in the flock; number (if possible), color, and position of bands (e.g. left leg green over metal or left leg green, right leg metal).

Please report sightings, along with your name, address, and telephone number, to the Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel, MD 20811, with a copy to Robert M. Schutsky, Muddy Run Ecological Laboratory, P.O. Box 10, Drumore, PA 17518 (phone 717-548-2121). All reports will be fully acknowledged.

Housing exchange request

I am an English ringer and Chairman of Chew Valley Ringing Station near Bristol, England. My wife, Katrina, and I would like to offer banders (from the eastern side of the United States, in particular) accommodation and birding in 1982 in return for the same in July and August 1981 for us.

We're both aged 29, teach in secondary schools, have a wide range of interests, and have travelled extensively, although so far not to the United States. I would like to observe as much as possible the techniques and procedures of your banding schemes, as well as exchange ideas and perhaps a few beers!

If you are interested, please write to: Peter Rock, 12 Fairlawn Road, Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5JR, England.

Vulture Vibes



Logo sketch by Barb Petorak

The major objective of this column is to act as a link, referral, and sounding board of ideas to be utilized by vulture banders throughout the country. Granted, everyone is involved in his/her own research and does not want to divulge all aspects of the work being done — some of which may be very difficult. I believe, however, that it is with a sense of duty to our fellow vulture workers, that we do share some of the ups and downs of our various projects. This is not only important to the person who is just getting started with his/her work, but it is of the utmost importance to the birds — and isn't that what everything is all about? Aren't we all striving for more knowledge about the vultures so that we may see them survive?

With the above in mind — it has been brought to my attention that some readers are totally against the wing tagging projects. It has been said that the tags are detrimental to the birds, and that some fatalities have occurred because the wing tags had become snagged. I had never heard of any such instances and was very much surprised. This is the type of incident that should be publicized so that all vulture banders can be aware of such hazards. So, if anyone has anything of interest — be it a gripe or a comment — please contact me so that we can share it with all vulture researchers.

The BBL is aware that the color tagging plan has its limitations. Only so many people can use so many colors and, when these colors are all being used, people who want to do research are turned

down because of lack of colors and cooperation with existing projects. I urge all banders who are involved in vulture research to contact me so that we can set up some type of communication system within our ranks. If you are currently using colored wing tags, please tell me how long you have done so, what colors you are using, and give a general description of the type of research you are doing. The BBL would like us to set up some type of protocol and, if agreeable with them, they will adopt it. This was attempted about a year ago, but with minimal results. Also, if you are not currently color-tagging but have done some in the past, I would like to know. I would also appreciate reports of any research being done without the use of color tagging. If anyone has suggestions for methods other than color tagging, please come forward with those ideas. Perhaps we can devise another way of marking birds which will not present a hazard to them. Thank you for your cooperation.

Bird Sightings: First priority — report them to the banding laboratory. Also, I keep a file of any and all sighting reports which I receive, and I would appreciate being sent copies of all sightings reported to the BBL.

I received a report of an unidentifiable bird carcass found in New York with a blue color marker on it. It had been reported to the BBL and, while the finder awaited information, I was shown a photograph of the marker. I recognized it as the type used by Shiela Gaby of Miami, FL for tagging Turkey Vultures. I contacted her and she related that this bird was tagged as a juvenile on 17 January 1978 in the Miami area. The bird had been seen during the winter there but had not been reported again until this finding.

I had an interesting find near a large roost site that I have been monitoring. I discovered a group of vulture skeletons, estimated to be at least two years old from the moss on the bones. Investigation of the area leads me to think that the birds were killed when the roost tree was struck by lightning. Does anyone else know of similar occurrences of lightning-caused fatalities? I would appreciate receiving any information about this.

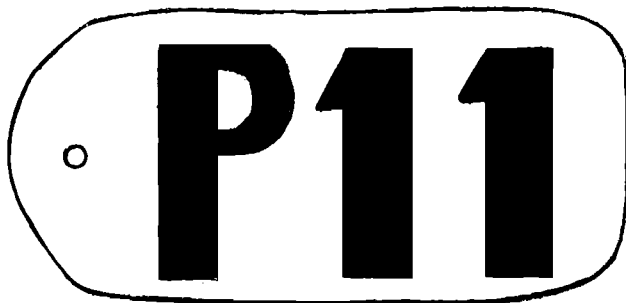
Please send all general correspondence to: Nancy Karner, 126 Pennsylvania Ave., Bangor, PA 18013.

Wanted: White Ibis Sightings

250 juvenile White Ibis were marked this spring near Georgetown, SC with orange wing tags. Little is known about their post-fledging dispersal, and a report of any sightings would be useful and much appreciated, *even if you cannot distinguish the number.*

Tags are on one wing only, with black numbers and, in some cases, numbers in combination with letters.

If you see any of these birds, please send the date, location, and tag number to the Bird Banding Laboratory with a copy to Peter Frederick, c/o Zoology Dept., Wilson Hall 046-A, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.



Sample tag—actual size

Request for sightings Red-shouldered Hawks

Reports of any sightings of immature, colour-banded (red, yellow, white, and light blue) Red-shouldered Hawks would be greatly appreciated. Please note location and sequence of coloured leg bands (plastic rings), the time the bird was seen, and the location.

Please report as soon as possible to: Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel, MD 20811, with a copy to Brenda L. Penak, Dept. of Renewable Resources, MacDonald College of McGill University, Ste. Anne deBellevue, Quebec, Canada.

Information wanted: Blue Jays

As part of a long-term investigation into the behavioral ecology of Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*), field researchers in 1979 began color-banding the legs of jays captured in Anoka County, MN at the Cedar Creek Natural History Area and the Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area. As of July 1980, approximately 250 adults, 50 fledglings, and 150 nestlings have received individually-coded combinations of plastic bands in addition to the standard F&WS numbered aluminum band.

If you should see one of these banded birds, please note the following information:

1. Location, date, time
2. Color band/aluminum band combination (most birds have two bands per leg, including the aluminum band; colors used include red, yellow, light blue, light green, white, black, orange, and lavender)
3. Habitat type (deciduous woods, coniferous forest, river bottoms, etc.)
4. Activity of the bird (eating at a feeding station, foraging on lawn, courtship behavior, etc.)
5. Measurements (if the bird has been captured by a bander, please measure the wing, culmen, tarsus, tail, and weight)

Because little is known about the Blue Jay migrational pattern in the plains states, we are also interested in information about foreign recaptures or recoveries of jays banded in the central U.S. and Canada.

Please report sightings to the Bird Banding Laboratory, with a copy to Bill Hilton, Jr., James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455. All reports will be acknowledged. If a dead bird is recovered, please freeze it immediately in a plastic bag and inform Hilton.



The Snake River Birds of Prey Area

A plea to help save one of America's most unique resources

An 80 mile stretch of Idaho's Snake River Canyon supports the densest known population of nesting raptors in North America. A unique and valuable ecosystem, the Snake River Birds of Prey Area is threatened by future agricultural land development. If we are to preserve this unique resource for future generations, we need your letters of support.

The Secretary of the Interior has recommended that Congress establish this area as the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area, through amendment of Title VI of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. This legislation will permanently protect 609,582 acres of canyon lands and surrounding desert habitat. The acreage is a compromise that will protect most key areas of habitat for the raptors' prey base.

The legislation, Senate Bill 2683 and House Bill 7359, was introduced in May 1980. The bill is receiving considerable opposition from development interests and "sagebrush rebellion" backers in Idaho. *Your letters to Congress are vitally needed.*

Facts (This information may be helpful in writing letters).

- Fourteen species of raptors nest within the Conservation Area. An additional 10 species use the area in fall and winter. Over 500 pairs nesting here produce more than 1500 young annually. This is the highest known density of nesting raptors in North America and perhaps the world.
- The boundary of the proposed Conservation Area is based on the essential requirements of the birds, as determined from four years of intensive research by Bureau of Land Management and independent scientists.
- The nesting raptors compete for abundant but heavily-used prey populations in the surrounding desert. To secure sufficient prey, falcons and other raptors must travel up to 15 miles from the nests in the canyon walls.



- The prey needed by the raptors (primarily Townsend ground squirrels) depend on grazed rangeland, and are not compatible with modern irrigated agricultural development. Conversion of the native range to irrigated farmland causes marked declines in the nesting density and reproductive success of birds of prey.
- Crops produced by agricultural development within the area will lower the prices existing Idaho farmers receive for the same crops. The electricity needed to pump water to the land is not available, and its cost would be prohibitive if it were. Agricultural development would also eliminate grazing in the area; grazing is compatible with the raptors' requirements.

Key elements of the Legislation

State and private land ownership within the area is not affected by the legislation.

Present livestock grazing will continue.

The cooperative wildlife habitat management program with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game will continue.

Recreational uses of the area will continue.

National Guard use of the area (for training) will continue.

Hard rock minerals can be developed through leasing. Oil, gas, and geothermal leasing will also be allowed.

Conversion of federally-owned native range (raptor prey habitat) to irrigated farmland through the Desert Land and Carey Acts will **not** be allowed.

What you can do

LETTERS ARE NEEDED! Some of the preceding information can be used, and please include your own thoughts about why the legislation creating the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area should be passed.

Address letters to: Honorable Henry M. Jackson, Chairman, Energy and Natural Resources Committee, 3016 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., United State Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510; and to Honorable Morris K. Udall, Chairman, Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, 1324 Longworth House Office Bldg., U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515. And send letters to your own Congressmen and Senators.

(Taken from a release prepared by the Idaho Conservation League and the Golden Eagle Audubon Society.)

Wanted: Sightings of Raptors

Golden Eagles, Prairie Falcons, Red-tailed Hawks, and Common Ravens have been marked with colored patagial markers as part of a long-term study of raptors in the Snake River Birds of Prey Area.

Please report sightings to the Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel, MD 20811 and the Snake River Birds of Prey Research Staff, 230 Collins Road, Boise, ID 83702 (phone 208-334-1582).

American Kestrel recapture

An American Kestrel (1143-86927), which I banded as L-F near Youngsville, Pa on 7 June 1979 was retrapped by J. Wallace Coffey near Bristol, TN on 22 December 1979.

Ted Grisez
8 Belmont Dr.
Warren, PA 16365

Color-marked Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks

The research personnel at Virginia Polytechnic Institute's Winchester Fruit Research Laboratory have released tail-imped and color-banded Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks in the vicinity of Front Royal, Virginia.

These hawks have been marked to determine secondary toxicity effects to raptors from an experimental orchard rodenticide. We are interested in mortality data, so knowing that these birds are alive after application will aid us greatly.

Please note:

Species, age, location, date, and time

Color of bands (orange, red, blue, or green)

Color of impeded tail feather (red, orange, yellow, or green)

Location of impeded feathers (2 in center, 2 outers on left side, 2 outers on right side, 1 outer on each side)

Please report any sightings to the Bird Banding Laboratory with a copy to Lenny Leta, Mark Merson, or Ross Byers, c/o VPI & SU's Winchester Fruit Research Laboratory, 2500 Valley Avenue, Winchester, VA 22601. Phone 703-667-8330.



Color-marked hummingbird

From 20 to 23 August 1979 a Broad-tailed Hummingbird appeared at a feeder on Signal Peak in the Pinal Mountains of Arizona wearing two ribbons — one pink and one green — about 2.5 cm long and 0.4 cm wide, attached to its back.

Would anyone who might have knowledge of who attached these ribbons to the bird please write to Gale Monson, 8831 N. Riviera Dr., Tucson, AZ 85704.