

Bander's Forum

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Last year WBBA published a table of body weights of North American birds. In the course of compiling published and unpublished data for the table, we noticed that large samples were not available for a surprising number of relatively common species. In the final version of the table, less than 20 weights were available for 198 of the 686 species. Obviously there is still need for collection and publication of primary biological data.

During the search for weight data, we corresponded with many banders. Almost without exception, banders proved eager to have their data used. In fact, fully a third of the data in the weight table were previously unpublished. However, few banders seem willing to write articles that would make their data available to others. For some, the analysis and time required for a typical article may be intimidating.

As a solution to this problem, we suggest that NABB publish primary biological data collected by banders as a regular feature, patterned after the "Weights and Measurements" column in *Corella*, the Australian bird study journal. Such a column could feature variation noted by the bander between age classes, sexes, seasons, or banding locales, along with criteria used to identify sexes or age classes. Molt patterns, changes in plumage or soft part colors could be additional topics for this column. A variety of measures in addition to weight could be presented, such as wing chords, culmen, tail, or tarsus lengths, or whatever data are pertinent to a species. Banders could publish interesting patterns in their data to stimulate exchanges with other banders.

To illustrate, we present below weights, wing chords, and culmen lengths for three species of locally common sparrows in southeastern Arizona. We selected these three measurements because they are frequently important to ecologists studying relationships between sparrow species.

We hope banders who may be hesitant to write a full article summarizing their studies will make their data available to others through this new feature in NABB.

WEIGHTS AND MEASUREMENTS #1 ARIZONA SPARROWS

All data collected from live birds captured in mist nets.

BOTTERI'S SPARROW *Aimophila botterii*

Sparrows were banded from June to August 1981-84 by RKB and Betsy Webb at the Appleton-Whittell Audubon Research Ranch, Santa Cruz Co, Arizona. Weights were taken with a triple beam balance or a 100 g Pesola.

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Exposed culmen = length of culmen from base of feathers on the proximal portion of the bill to tip of upper mandible. Wing chord = the length of the wing resting in a normal, unflattened, and folded position from the tip of the longest primary to the most forward edge of the wing. Birds were sexed by brood patch or cloacal protuberance. Data are from 47 individuals.

		Mean	±	s.d.	N	Range
Wing Chord (mm)	ALL	63.2	±	2.5	47	57-69
	M	63.2	±	2.3	43	58-69
	F	61.0			4	57-65
Weight (g)	All	19.6	±	1.7	45	15.7-23.8
	M	19.7	±	1.6	39	15.7-23.8
	F	19.2			6	17.4-22.0
Exp. Culmen (mm)	ALL	12.0			4	12.0-12.0

CASSIN'S SPARROW *Aimophila cassinii*

Sparrows were banded year-round from 1982-85, by RKB at Appleton-Whittell National Audubon Society Research Ranch, Santa Cruz Co., and at the Wilmot Cienega, southwest of Tucson, Pima Co., Arizona. Weights were taken with a 100 or 50 g Pesola scale. Exposed culmen and wing chord as above. The author wishes to thank the Directors of the Research Ranch, for allowing work there. Birds were sexed by brood patch or laparotomy. Data are from 144 individuals.

		Mean	±	S.D.	N	Range
Wing Chord (mm)	ALL	63.0	±	2.4	102	56-68
	M	63.7	±	2.0	29	59-67
	F	63.8			4	63-65
Weight (g)	ALL	18.3	±	2.9	125	16.0-21.5
	M	17.7	±	1.0	35	16.0-19.5
	F	18.0	±	1.3	12	17.0-21.5
Exp. Culmen (mm)	ALL	12.0	±	0.6	16	11.5-13

YELLOW-EYED JUNCO *Junco phaeonotus*

Juncos were banded year-round from 1982-85 by JBD in the Santa Catalina Mountains, Pima Co., Arizona. Weights were taken with an Ohaus triple-beam balance or 100g Pesola. Exposed culmen and wing chord as above. Birds were aged by plumage; unknown age = adult plumage birds from Oct. - Dec. Data are from 96 individuals.

	Mean	±	s.d.	N	Range
Wing Chord (mm)	HY 75.6	±	3.1	17	73-81
	AHY 75.8	±	3.5	44	70-85
	UNK 77.7	±	3.5	35	71-87
Weight (g)	HY 19.1	±	1.5	16	16-21.3
	AHY 20.3	±	1.3	38	17-23
	UNK 21.0	±	1.4	20	17.5-23.5
Exp. Culmen (mm)	HY 10.7	±	0.8	15	9-12
	AHY 10.7	±	0.7	35	9-12
	UNK 10.6	±	0.6	28	10-12

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News, Notes and Comments

Color-marked Greater Sandhill Cranes

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge staff, Harney Co., Oregon has been color-marking Greater Sandhill Cranes with plastic leg bands since 1969. Since 1981, green, blue, red, yellow, orange, and white bands have been used in various combinations above the tibial-tarsal joints. About 300 cranes have been color-marked in this manner since studies were initiated. Recently, two color bands have been used on each leg, plus one aluminum U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service leg band. Plastic leg bands are of various sizes, but most do have one 4-inch white marker with various numbers, designs, or letters (e.g. X-49, A-29, E, X) engraved on the band. Smaller colored plastic bands accompany the large white marker. If you have the opportunity to observe any color-marked cranes, the following information would be appreciated:

1. Date and time of observation.
2. Location of observation.
3. Colors, position of colors, and relative size of bands on each leg, and any symbols you observe on the bands.
4. Behavior of bird (flock size, feeding, etc.)
5. Observer's name, address, and phone number.

Please report any sightings to:

C.D. Littlefield
% Malheur National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 113
Burns, Oregon 97720
Phone: (503) 493-2323

Color Marked White-faced Ibis

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is requesting your help in locating White-faced Ibis wearing colored leg bands. During the summer of 1984, colored leg bands were placed on one hundred young ibis at Malheur NWR. Each ibis has a unique combination of three colored leg bands and one aluminum USFWS leg band. If you have the opportunity to observe any color marked White-faced Ibis the following information would be appreciated:

1. Date and time of observation.
2. Location of observation.
3. Colors and position (top or bottom) of colors on each leg (left and right).
4. Behavior of bird (size of group, feeding, etc.).
5. Observer's name, address, and phone number.

Color coded
leg bands

Please report sighting to:

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P.O. Box 113
Burns, OR 97720
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