

Inland Regional News

Inland Bird Banding Association

Founded 1922

Nature Notes from Nebraska

A repeat of an unusual nesting record has happened in Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy County, Nebraska, this past spring and summer. Red-shouldered Hawks have nested successfully a second time. The first confirmed record was in 1992. Then, a nest was found high on the ridges overlooking the marsh, and I watched three young from this nest take to the air on 15 June and soar above the forest to test their wings. I just happened to be at the right place at the right time. The female called and coaxed them to follow her as the male tried to decoy away four or five crows.

Adult birds were seen in Fontenelle Forest in 1993, but there was no evidence of nesting. The excessive rains through spring and well into summer probably flooded their usual feeding habitat which would have made finding food almost impossible.

Then, a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks overwintered into 1994 and by the end of February, they were already into nest-building. This year they chose a very conspicuous branch of a dead cottonwood close to the road. It was extremely easy to monitor their nesting progress. The nest appeared a very flimsy structure but it met the needs of four nestlings seen the end of March. The nest was in the middle of my banding site and I banded there many times during incubation and feeding of their young. My presence did not seem to bother

the adults at all. They went about their business of carrying scores of frogs to feed their nestlings for over two months with no problem. All four young left the nest on 6 June.

Red-shouldered Hawks are a species of the eastern United States. They may have nested along the Missouri River bluffs in the past but these are the first two to be confirmed beyond any doubt. They are significant because they are the furthest WEST record for this population (at least this far north in their distribution). These hawks have added a special dimension to birding in the Forest and I hope they will be around for a long time. Anytime a species reaches the extreme limits of its distribution, there is always the possibility they may not be there indefinitely.

Ruth C. Green

Interesting Note on Northern Flicker

Midmorning (about 08:00 CDT) on 30 May 1994, near Cosgrove, Iowa, I caught and banded an AHY F Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker. When I prepared to release the bird, she laid an egg in my hand and promptly flew away. The bird was taken

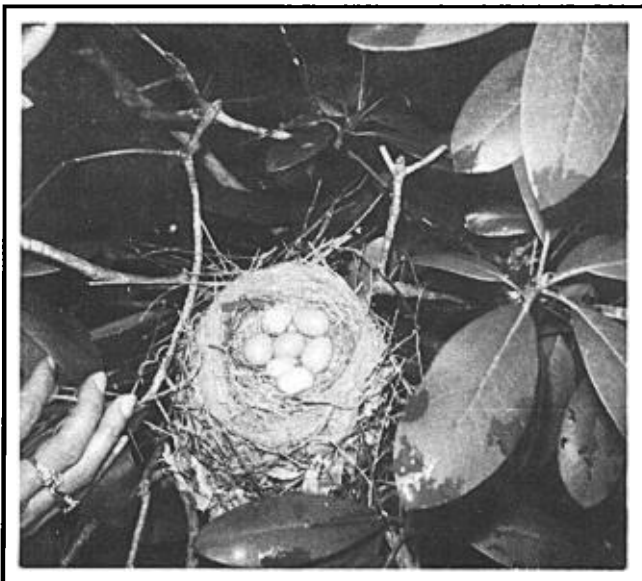
in a mist net and would, at most, had been held for 20 min. She endured my normal processing that included several linear body measurements and ending with weight taken from a Pesola scale while in a holding bag (from nylon stocking). The egg appeared after she was unrolled from the bag in order to be released. The flicker weighed 140 g. The egg was translucent pinkish-white, 27 x 21.5 mm and weighed 7 g. When the bird was recaptured 12 days later, it weighed 130 g.

Mark Müller

3911 SW Greencastle Avenue
Oxford, Iowa 52322

Interesting Note on Robin's Nest

This past nesting season provided Holmes Smith of Sherrodsville, Ohio, a very unusual American Robin's nest. The nest was situated in a rhododendron bush and contained, at one time, 3 Northern Cardinal eggs and 4 robin eggs (documented with photograph). A few days later only the robin eggs remained. Only 2 young hatched and both were banded before leaving the nest.



Forest Fragmentation and Nesting Productivity in Ohio

Nesting productivity of birds in mature oak/hickory forests of Wayne National Forest in SE Ohio was monitored during 1992 and 1993. This research was conducted on 14 30-35 ha plots on which nests were located and regularly monitored to determine their outcome and number of offspring produced. Percent forest cover for different sized areas around study plots was calculated using a Geographic Information System to investigate relationships between bird productivity and forest fragmentation at different spatial scales. Edge effects were also investigated by estimating the distance of each nest to four different types of edges: agricultural fields, clear cuts, small forest openings (e.g., maintained wildlife openings, selected cuts, gas and oil wells), and roads.

Results from 1992 indicated reproductive success of most species was positively associated with forest cover within 5 km, but showed no relationship with forest cover within 1 km and only a weak association with forest cover within 10 km. An edge effect was also suggested for some species studied, although no effect was seen for all species combined. Reproductive success of two species (for which large numbers of nests were found) exhibited different patterns in relation to fragmentation and edge effects. Acadian Flycatcher productivity was positively associated with forest cover within 5 km, but this same measure of fragmentation was negatively associated with Wood Thrush productivity. A negative relationship existed between Acadian Flycatcher productivity and distance from an edge, while there was no relationship between Wood Thrush nesting success and distance from an edge.

In 1993, productivity of most species (including Acadian Flycatchers) and productivity for all species combined showed no association with measures of forest fragmentation at any spatial scale. Combining both years of data also shows no relationship between forest cover and overall bird productivity. Wood Thrushes are one exception to this general statement. Thrush productivity continued to be negatively associated with forest cover

when both years were combined. Overall, an edge effect was not seen in 1993, although cowbird parasitism tended to be higher closer to edges (particularly clear cuts) and predation tended to be higher closer to small forest openings.

Cowbird parasitism was negatively associated with forest cover within 3 km of a site for both years. However, parasitism rates were very low in both

years (less than 10% of the nests on most plots) and had minor effects on the reproductive success of species.

Randy Dettmers

Department of Zoology
Ohio State University
1735 Neil Avenue
Columbus, Ohio



Western Regional News

Western Bird Banding Association

Founded 1925

ANNUAL REPORT

The following pages contain the 1993 Annual Report, again compiled by Coyote Creek Riparian Station, to whom the Western Bird Banding Association extends its thanks for this major effort. The report identifies species targeted for banding, and banders who have banded the largest numbers of each species and therefore have the most data available about them.

While no measure of effort is available for this Report, a number of banders reporting their results are participating in "constant effort" programs, such as MAPS during the breeding season and related programs during migration seasons. Pooled data from this continent-wide network of stations allows banding data to be used to determine statistically significant population trends as well as to measure productivity and survivorship.

DON'T BE A "SLOB" BANDER

Slobs in any group are those whose irresponsible behavior brings the whole group or activity into disrepute. While almost all banders are careful and conscientious, there are always a few who do not follow correct procedures.

A recent incident illustrates how easy it is to give an unfavorable impression of banding to the public. Two field trips of birdwatchers to a site attractive to migrants found mist-nets furred on net poles in very visible locations. There was no sign indicating to whom the nets belonged. On one visit some nets were only loosely furred and one group watched a bird entangle itself in a net. Fortunately one of the trip participants had experience and was able to remove the bird. But what impression of banders do you think the group had?

Using the easy methods for net storage (see NABB 18:49-50) there is no reason to leave them up; the risk of loss or damage is too great except in the most secure locations. Don't give Murphy's Law (If anything can go wrong it will.) a chance to operate by leaving nets unattended. Robert C. Tweit

1995 WBBA Annual Meeting

Next year's meeting will be in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in late September when fall migration on the Rio Grande is in full swing. Plan now to attend.