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NEWS, NOTES, COMMENTS

Color Marking Hints

To my surprise, *NABB's* recent literature review of Brown and Brown (*Safring News* 21:32-33, 1992; see *NABB* 19:103) reported their suggestion that blue is the most readily identified color for colored anodized metal bands under all weather and light conditions. I have found blue to be the worst color for either anodized or celluloid bands. I have used both band types on Prairie Chickens (Hamerstrom and Hamerstrom 1949, *Auk* 66:313-337) and chickadees (Hamerstrom 1942, *Wilson Bull.* 54:32-42), and have used colored jesses on Northern Harriers (Hamerstrom, 1986, *Harrier, hawk of the marshes*, Smithsonian Inst. Press). Over 7,000 observers have helped with our research. Instead of blue, we have used red, green, yellow, black, and white markers. (Men were tested for color-blindness; we left the ladies in peace.)

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Waterfall Glenn, IL, MAPS Program

The Chicago Bird Observatory completed its fourth year of monitoring avian reproduction at Waterfall Glenn Forest Preserve, Cook Co, IL. The MAPS protocol was followed. This constant site and effort monitoring program has had no significant changes in procedure for the past three years. From 1991 through 1993, a decline in the population and nesting success of ground nesting and foraging birds was recognized. Measured as the ratio of HY to AHY birds, reproductive rates in this group declined from 0.23 in 1991 to 0.08 in 1993. By contrast, there was little variation in reproduction for birds that forage and nest in the canopy.

During this same period (1991-1993), deer populations increased from 32/mi² to over 140/mi². We believe that the increasing deer population and associated heavy browsing are the significant factor in reduced nesting success.

During the winter of 1993-1994, the Forest Preserve District started an intensive deer culling program. This program reduced the population to less than 35/mi². We expected that it would take several years to notice any effect on terrestrial birds, but reproductive levels for 1994 were the

highest we have recorded at Waterfall Glenn. HY:AHY ratios increased to 0.3 in 1994.

It is difficult for us to state categorically that deer were responsible for these changes in reproduction levels. Other factors, in particular weather, influence reproductive success. We do not believe we can begin to establish base lines for the impact of local weather until there are several years of data with a stabilized deer population. These results from 1993 led to the development of a new program at Waterfall Glen called "Deer, Birds and an Urban Preserve." This program is designed to correlate changes in deer populations, recovery of ground cover and understory plants, and changes in bird populations.

Of particular interest are two Neotropical migrants that have failed to appear since 1992: Ovenbirds and Wood Thrushes.

-- from *Net Work News*, Newsletter of the Chicago Bird Observatory, March 1995.

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