

# Wintering Ovenbird from Belize Recovered on Pennsylvania Breeding Ground

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## ABSTRACT

A first-winter Ovenbird banded in a cacao plantation in central Belize on 8 February 1989 was found dead on the deck of a home on its breeding ground in northwestern Pennsylvania on 28 June 1997, tying the nine-year age record for the species.

## INTRODUCTION

In January and February of 1989, in a study of use of agricultural habitats by wintering Neotropical migrants, we banded 55 wintering Ovenbirds (*Seiurus aurocapillus*) in Belize. The bird carrying band number 2061-96079, one of eight Ovenbirds banded in a cacao plantation near La Democracia that winter, was found dead on 28 June 1997 on the deck of a home in Saegertown, Crawford Co., Pennsylvania. The band was not submitted, but the finder, Ms. Becki Michalak, verified the band number and confirmed that the bird was an Ovenbird. Ms. Michalak's six acres of open land are surrounded on three sides by hundreds of acres of mature woods—typical nesting habitat for Ovenbirds.

## DISCUSSION

This bird, which weighed 18.7 g when banded on 8 Feb 1989, had rusty tips to its tertials, indicating that it was in its first winter. It would have hatched probably in May or June of 1988, most likely in or near northwestern Pennsylvania, and we can assume it had flown nine round trips to Belize. We have found that Ovenbirds not only return year after year to the same nesting territory, but we have recaptured wintering birds on the same winter territory in subsequent years in Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala.

According to the Bird Banding Laboratory, the Ovenbird age record of 9 years, 0 months (Klimkiewicz et al. 1983) is still the oldest. That bird was banded during fall migration near Mastic, NY, on the south shore of Long Island, on 9 Aug 1952 by the late J. T. Nichols, and found on 25 June 1961 about 32 miles farther west at Cold Spring Harbor on the north shore of Long Island. The Belize bird ties this record.

## SUMMARY

Since 1984 we have banded more than 9,350 migrant passerines on their wintering grounds in Mexico, the West Indies, Central America, and northern South America, and this is the first to be reported from its breeding ground.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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## LITERATURE CITED

- Klimkiewicz, M.K., R.B. Clapp, and A.G. Fitcher. 1983. Longevity records of North American birds: Remizidae through Parulinae. *J. Field Ornithol.* 54:287-294.

