

**ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS
AND WORKSHOPS PRESENTED AT
THE MEETING OF THE EASTERN BIRD
BANDING ASSOCIATION 16 APR 2005
(*denotes presenter)**

Monitoring trends in southern Ontario Bald Eagle productivity and population size - Dawn K. Laing, Bald Eagle Program Biologist and Coordinator, Bird Studies Canada/Études d'Oiseaux Canada; P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ontario N0E 1M0

The Bald Eagle was listed as an endangered species in Ontario in 1973. Bird Studies Canada (BSC) has worked closely with the provincial and federal governments, landowners, and volunteers for many years to help affect and monitor the recovery of the eagle population in southern Ontario. As a result of the DDT-era, by 1980 there were only three active nests along the Lake Erie shoreline, none of which produced chicks. Although the population has increased dramatically since this time, there is now evidence that Ontario eagles have a shorter life span than typical wild eagles. In collaboration with the Canadian Wildlife Service and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, BSC has been monitoring the population using traditional and technological methods [to account for this apparent difference]. In 2004, BSC was able to compile information on 47 Bald Eagle territories within the study area, noted seven new territories, and deployed three satellite transmitters as part of their technological approach to monitoring southern Ontario juvenile eagles.

Analysis of frugivory of migrating birds at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory - Beverly J. Brown, Biology Department, Nazareth College, and Patricia A. Jones, pjones6@naz.edu, Nazareth College of Rochester, Box #452, PO Box 18900, Rochester, NY 14618

The analysis of avian diets is an important, yet often overlooked, component of avian biology. Many bird species are known to be frugivorous, but little is known about the diet of these birds. The increasingly fragmented nature of bird habitats makes this area of study crucial to the management of migrating bird populations. Learning about the diets of birds that pass through

the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory is essential to the effective management of these bird species. For example, if a fruiting plant species is known to play a critical role in a bird's diet, steps can be taken to ensure the availability of this plant species to the migrating bird. The objective of this project was to determine the degree of frugivory that takes place in the diets of migrating birds at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory. Fecal samples from representative bird species were collected over a period of three seasons. These samples were analyzed to determine the presence of fruit material. We concluded that the degree of frugivory in the species studies was not significantly different from season to season. In fact, the extent of frugivory in these species was quite low. Frugivory may still play an important role in these birds' diets, but we were unable to determine the role of frugivory in the diet of the migrating birds at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory.

Report from the United States Banding Office - Monica Tomosy, Chief; Bird Banding Lab, USGS, Biological Resources Division, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, 12100 Beech Forest Road, Laurel, MD 20708

The new Chief covered the status of key elements of the Bird Banding Laboratory and reviewed highlights over the past year. These include: the upcoming Oracle-based database system, band supply, banding requests, band data requests, Band Manager, the Reward Band program, the 1-800-Mexico program, the partnership with Canada's BBO, the strategic planning process, the budget, the Federal Advisory Committee, and a look to the future.

The Canadian Bird Banding Office: supporting migratory bird protection, research and conservation - Lesley Howes, Bird Banding Office, National Wildlife Research Centre, Canadian Wildlife Service, 1125 Colonel By Drive/Raven Road, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0H3

The year 2005 marks the 100-year anniversary of bird banding in Canada. The information that has been attained in the last 100 years is phenomenal for the scientific study and conservation of birds. Despite advances in scientific methods and technologies, the simple bird band remains the basic tool for ornithological research and

monitoring throughout the world. The Canadian Bird Banding Office continues to support ornithological and conservation research both in Canada and abroad while playing an active role in migratory bird protection. This is achieved by issuing permits and federal bands, promoting ethical banding, bander development and training, and developing policies related to capture and banding, such as a policy for banding migratory birds listed in Canada's *Species at Risk Act* (SARA).

Effectiveness of informal banding training at three prairie bird observatories - Brenda C. Dale, Canadian Wildlife Service, 200 – 4999 98th Ave, Edmonton, AB, T6B 2X3

Informal training is defined as when a trainer works with a student for an undefined period of time and then recommends them for a permit based on the abilities the trainer has observed. The utility of this means of determining a candidate's readiness was tested in 1993 at three western Canadian banding observatories. The candidates and their trainers independently examined birds captured at their stations and their determinations were compared using a set of criteria developed by C.J. Ralph and others. Using those criteria, all the candidates would fail as they made errors in species identification and in age and sex determination. A new set of criteria were designed that took into account the nature of the errors and some candidates would pass based on the revised measures. It was clear that there is drift if banders work independently after short periods of exposure to training. It was also clear that how well they fared in testing was very dependent on who tested them, as not all trainers would make the same determination.

Monitoring avian productivity and survivorship (MAPS): Discussing the new molt terminology (pre-formative vs first pre-basic) and working with MAPSPROG - Danielle Kaschube, The Institute for Bird Populations, P.O. Box 1346, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956-1346

New terminology was introduced by Howell et al. (2003) which recommended a modification to the "Humphrey-Parkes" molt and plumage terminology. Howell et al. recommended that the fall molt in juvenile birds, which was previously called the

first pre-basic molt, be renamed the pre-formative molt. The MAPS program adopted this new terminology and incorporated it into the new molt limits and plumage coding system introduced for the 2004 season. A review of the new molt terminology, the reasons behind the change, and how the new terminology was applied in the MAPS coding system was discussed.

MAPS contributors are asked to submit data using MAPSPROG, the computer data entry and verification program created by The Institute for Bird Populations. We are always working to improve MAPSPROG and so the next incarnation will include a few new features. These will include verification checks for data from the entire year (not just the MAPS season) and having the program provide more feedback on ageing birds, specifically to second-year or after- second- year using molt limits and plumage. Bring questions and concerns about MAPSPROG and I will try to address them.

Passerine age/sex identification workshop - Robert P. Yunick, 1527 Myron St., Schenectady, NY. 12309

Over 70 specimens, wings, and tails of common eastern passerines are used to illustrate how certain plumage characteristics may be used to determine age/sex in these species. Among the plumage characteristics described are rectrix shape differences, molt limits, the retention of certain juvenal/basic feather tracts compared to their adult versions, the effect and use of feather wear, and the presence of flight feather molt. The presentation format is self-guided and allows hands-on inspection of the critical plumage characteristics described on the notes accompanying each species. Specimens courtesy of New York State Museum, Joseph Bopp, Collections Manager; and Princeton Skinners, thanks to Hannah Suthers.

Behavioral studies reveal information about navigation mechanisms in migratory birds - Mark Deutschlander, Dept. Biology, Hobart and William Smith College, Geneva, NY 14456

Navigation is one of the critical tasks that birds must accomplish for successful migration. Much research has been conducted on navigation and

has demonstrated that a suite of stimuli including stellar, magnetic, and sunset cues interact to help birds find their appropriate wintering and breeding grounds. However, we are only beginning to understand how birds utilize and integrate these for cues for orientation to form a complete navigation system; in some cases, we still do not fully understand how birds utilize a single cue for navigation. For example, although the earth's magnetic field is involved in compass orientation in birds, the role the magnetic field in a "map" component of navigation is not well understood. In this presentation I demonstrate how orientation cages can be used to examine navigation in individual birds. I then show you how this technique was used to examine the role of geographic variation in the magnetic field on the migratory orientation of Australian silvereyes. Finally, I present experiments that are currently underway at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory to examine the hierarchy of orientation mechanisms in thrushes.

Getting to the point: Rectrix shape morphometrics in age discrimination of Ovenbirds - Kristen M. Covino*, Joanna M. Panasiwicz, Sara R. Morris, and H. David Sheets; Departments of Biology and Physics, Canisius College, Buffalo, NY 14208.

Recently, bird banders have increased their certainty in determining the age of many passerine birds by incorporating a variety of characteristics including molt limits and feather shape. Previous studies using visual inspection or tip angle have shown that the outer rectrix tip shape differs between age groups in passerines; the rectrices are truncate in older birds and pointed in younger ones. In this study, we used a set of techniques known as geometric morphometrics to quantify the overall shape of Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) tail feathers. Specifically, we used two methods of semi-landmark-based morphometrics (perpendicular projection and bending energy alignment) along with an outline-based morphometric method to compare age groups. We measured points on the periphery of a digital image of the right fifth rectrix of 23 hatch-year (HY) and 23 after-hatch-year (AHY) specimens. The results indicate that all of the three methods used in this study were able to discriminate between HY and AHY individuals based on the overall shape of the fifth rectrix. Additionally, the two semi-landmark methods were

able to discriminate between the two age groups based on only the shape of the tip of the rectrix. Thus, our results indicate that all three geometric morphometric methods provide the same overall pattern, although the accuracy in discriminating between age classes varied slightly.

Lipid stores in plumage morphs and sexes of White-throated Sparrows during migration - Brendan McCabe, SUNY College at Brockport, Dept. of Environmental Science and Biology, Brockport, NY 14420

White-throated Sparrows (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) are short-distance migratory passerines that pass along the southern shore of Lake Ontario each spring and fall. This species displays two distinct color morphs, which are genetically determined, and exhibit different social behaviors. There is a white-striped version and a tan-striped version. The two color morphs pair disassociatively and produce equal proportions of white-striped and tan-striped offspring during the mating season. However, despite being hatched in equal proportions, more white-striped males return to the breeding grounds than tan-striped males, and more tan-striped females return than white-striped females. The apparent differential survival between color morphs and sexes may be the result of different behaviors associated with migration. Since adequate fat reserves are an essential component to a successful migration, I investigated whether the distinct color morphs and sexes carried different amounts of fat during both fall and spring migration.

"Me no call, you no come, me no send, you no go": A look inside Bird Studies Canada's Latin American Training Program - Stuart A. Mackenzie, Long Point Bird Observatory Program Coordinator, c/o Bird Studies Canada, PO Box 160, Port Rowan, ON N0E 1M0

As banders, bird conservation issues challenge us to evolve our research and education priorities and practices constantly as new information is disclosed and new ideas are presented. The importance of wintering habitat throughout the Caribbean, Central and South America for the conservation of what we commonly miss-identify as "our" Neotropical migrants is becoming more evident. Neotropical migrants should not be the

only concern as more and more of the region's native species are becoming vulnerable. Since 1984, the Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO), now Bird Studies Canada (BSC), has been involved in international efforts to foster homegrown ornithological research in Latin America and the Caribbean. The fundamental principle behind this effort is to provide the tools and training for grass-roots research from within the local communities, departing from the typical route of sending North American field biologists into other countries, which effectively excludes local biologists from achieving any sense of heritage and proprietorship. A homegrown ornithological knowledge and skill base is essential for making progress in these regions. LPBO/BSC has orchestrated a number of different approaches to this training by facilitating workshops in Cuba, Jamaica, and Mexico, through the auspices of BirdLife International, as well as bringing many Latin Americans to Long Point for one month of advanced field training. With continued investment in initiatives such as BSC's Latin American Training Program and others like it around the world, hopefully, we will continue to hear the call, have the ability to identify it, and respond with appropriate action.

POSTER ABSTRACTS
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Project Owlnet: Coordinated monitoring of Northern Saw-whet Owl populations using migration data - David F. Brinker, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, 1200 Frederick Rd., Catonsville, MD 21228 and J. Steve Huy, 3405 Sumantown Rd., Middletown, MD 21769

Trends in Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*) populations are not monitored well by national or continental monitoring schemes, such as the Breeding Bird Survey. Project Owlnet was started in 1995 to expand the network of banding stations focused on netting migrant owls. Project Owlnet has grown from roughly a dozen unorganized and loosely communicating stations in 1995 to over 80 stations with a much improved communication network. Project Owlnet provides a web site, list server, access to migration moni-

toring protocols, references pertinent to Northern Saw-whet Owls, aging and sexing information, lure vocalizations, and audiolure design details.

Central Appalachian Goshawk Project: The first 10 years - David F. Brinker, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, 1200 Frederick Rd., Catonsville, MD 21228 and J. Steve Huy, 3405 Sumantown Rd., Middletown, MD 21769

The Central Appalachian Goshawk Project (CAGP) was initiated in 1994 to increase the available information on the demographics and life history of Northern Goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis atricapillus*) in the east. The CAGP is a long-term effort designed to document basic breeding parameters of Northern Goshawks in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. Through 2004 there have been 20 documented Northern Goshawk territories south of Pennsylvania. Four of these are historical (pre-1980) observations. Through 2004, a total of 75 goshawks have been banded as part of the CAGP. Adults originally banded by CAGP have been retrapped at nest sites in subsequent years. One male was recaptured a total of three times between 1997 and 2001 and was at least seven years old when last captured. No adults have been recovered away from the territory where they were originally banded. Juvenile dispersal has been recorded for three chicks that were recovered or recaptured within the first twelve months of life. Since 2001, three pairs of nesting adult goshawks have been fitted with satellite radio transmitters. Movements of these three pairs are summarized.

Stopover rates and durations of migrant Northern Saw-whet Owls in southern Pennsylvania - Michael S. Hurban^{*1}, Emily A. Caruana¹, Sarah M. Musilli¹, Scott Weidensaul², H. David Sheets¹, and Sara R. Morris¹, ¹Departments of Biology and Physics, Canisius College, 2001 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14208; ²Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art, P.O. Box 33, Millersburg, PA 17061

Although Northern Saw-whet Owls are common migrants, little is known about the stopover ecology of this species. Using banding data collected on 2,374 Northern Saw-whet Owls from southern