

Western Bird Banding Association Grants for 2009

The Western Bird Banding Association offers two \$1,000 grants each year, one for research and the other for monitoring, for individuals and/or organizations engaged in projects in the New World using marked birds. Eight research and three monitoring proposals were received for consideration in 2009 for projects across the US and in Mexico, South America, and the Caribbean. The proposals receiving the grant awards are listed in the next column.

Monitoring

Award Recipient: Adam Hannuksela,
Alamos Wildlands Alliance

Title of Proposal: Wintering Passerine Bird
Community Distribution and Species Richness in
Southern Sonora Mexico

Project summary: Migratory bird populations have shown declines in recent decades. In southwestern Sonora, Mexico, a rare habitat known as el Pitayal is a wintering area for migratory birds of western North America. This habitat is relatively understudied and faces numerous threats. Since 2007, The Alamos Wildlands Alliance has been developing an assessment and monitoring program designed to help fill gaps in knowledge concerning wintering bird communities and to identify species and habitats in need of conservation. Specific objectives are: 1) Measure and describe the plant communities in three different habitat types, 2) determine survival rates of resident and migratory bird species, and 3) ascertain the relationships of bird communities to vegetation structure within coastal thornscrub. Outreach to school children and local people are also a part of the monitoring effort. A Mexican national is employed as a biologist to assist with monitoring. Continued monitoring in this ecosystem will provide valuable information concerning the avifauna of a rare habitat.

Research

Award Recipient: Leo R. Douglas, American
Museum of Natural history

Title of Proposal: Studying the Effect of Parrot-
Citrus Frugivory on Citrus Frugivory and Habitat

Quality of Bananaquits (*Coereba flaveola*) on the
Island of Dominica, and Training for Local
Researchers in Mist Netting and Banding Techniques

Project Summary: Species that are involved
in wildlife-agriculture conflicts can have a profound
influence on ecological community structure and
function. On the island of Dominica, *Amazona*
parrots are important causes of crop losses for farmers
of citrus. In some areas parrot frugivory produces
large quantities of partially opened/eaten citrus fruits
that provide a readily available food resource for
passerine birds. The current study aims to determine
whether and how parrot frugivory of citrus fruits
influences habitat quality and reproductive condition
of passerines within citrus agriculture landscapes on
the island. Additionally, this project will provide
targeted training in the methods of bird monitoring
for a graduate of the Dominica State College, the
island's only state managed institution of higher
learning, and members of the Division of Forestry,
Wildlife, and Parks, of the Ministry of Agriculture
and institutionalizing the research methods necessary
for avian-agriculture conflict research within these
institutions.

Klamath Bird Observatory Banding in 2009

Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO) continued its
comprehensive, long-term bird monitoring program
in the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion of northern
California and southern Oregon in 2009 in pursuit of
our mission to advance bird and habitat conservation
through science, education, and partnerships. This
report provides a brief summary of 2009 banding
efforts which included tissue sampling, nocturnal
bioacoustical monitoring, technical training, and
banding-associated outreach and education efforts.

KBO operated 15 banding stations and a single one-
day banding public demonstration. We continued
efforts at 11 stations that have been operated for 10 or
more years and four sites operated three or fewer
years. Combined capture totals from 293 banding
efforts at the 16 locations totaled 11,018 birds of 101
species captured during 14,510 net hours.

The ten most numerous captured species were Dark-

eyed (Oregon) Junco (952), Orange-crowned Warbler (656), Song Sparrow (532), Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler (496), Yellow Warbler (380), Purple Finch (328), Hermit Thrush (317), MacGillivray's Warbler (283), Wilson's Warbler (271), and Warbling Vireo (262).

KBO has contributed tissue samples to the UCLA Conservation Genetics Research Center for use in molecular genetic data analysis, international genetic material repository, and avian pathogen monitoring and research since 1999. In 2009, we collected just over 1,600 feather samples and 850 cloacal swab samples. In addition, we initiated a study of regional altitudinal migration using stable isotopes using paired feather and claw tissue for which 236 samples were collected.

We continued our collaboration with U.S. Forest Service Redwood Sciences Laboratory, in cooperation with Powdermill Nature Reserve, operating nocturnal bioacoustical monitoring stations. By integration and calibration of banding and bioacoustical data, it is hoped that more precise and accurate patterns of migration at a range of spatial scales can be described. The recording devices were operated nightly at two of our banding sites mid-August through early-November, inclusive of the fall landbird migration.

KBO's bird banding training program is an integral part of our monitoring program. Eight intern students received banding training, and seven were subsequently evaluated and certified by the North American Banding Council at the Bander level, with two also certified at the Bander Trainer level. As part of our training program, this was our third year participating in the U.S. National Park Service Park Flight Program hosting a banding intern, a young biologist from Belize. In addition, visiting biologists and volunteers received banding techniques training in the field totaling seven person days. In a celebration of community involvement, KBO welcomed the contributions of several local volunteers who assisted at Ashland-area stations while receiving training in banding skills for 62 person days.

In May, KBO and several partners co-sponsored an intensive banding workshop at the Asa Wright Nature

Centre in Trinidad and Tobago with staff and former KBO international interns who assisted as instructors. A banding techniques workshop was presented in July for Klamath Bird Monitoring Network cooperators and other regional researchers at our Upper Klamath Lake Field Station. In November, we co-sponsored a banding workshop in the Madre de Dios region of Peru, coordinated by a former KBO international intern.

Over the course of the year, 1,102 people visited our banding sites during field trips and bird-walks. Banding sites were visited by 951 students and teachers from regional schools, including K-12th grade and college students. During public banding demonstrations as part of KBO-hosted bird walks and other outreach events, 151 people visited our mist-netting operations.

Many thanks are due to all the individuals and organizations that helped make our 2009 banding efforts a great success. Data resulting from these efforts are contributed to several databases including the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory, Institute for Bird Populations' Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship program, Klamath Bird Monitoring Network, Landbird Monitoring Network of the Americas, Avian Knowledge Network, eBird, UCLA Center for Tropical Research's Population, Structure, and Conservation of Neotropical Migrant Birds program.

These efforts were made possible through support from the Asa Wright Nature Centre; Ashland Rotary Club; Ashland School District and the Willow Wind Community Learning Center; Carnegie Museum of Natural History Powdermill Nature Reserve; City of Ashland Parks and Recreation Department and the North Mountain Park Nature Center; Gladys and John Zurlo Charitable Trust; Harriman Rural Fire District; Jefferson Nature Center; Ji Ji Foundation, Kinsman Foundation; Klamath County, Oregon; Mountaineers Foundation; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; New Belgium Philanthropy; Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds; Southern Oregon University; Tarikaya Ecological Preserve, USDA Fremont-Winema, Klamath, and Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forests and International Programs; USDI Bureau of Land Management Oregon State Office, and Lakeview and

Medford Districts; USDI National Park Service Oregon Caves National Monument, Klamath Network, and Park Flight Program; USDI Fish and Wildlife Service Region 1 Non-game Landbird Program and Klamath Basin Refuge Complex; Wildlife Images; and KBO members and private sector contributors. We especially thank Lance Lerum of the Fremont-Winema National Forests; and Ron Cole and Dave Mauser of the Klamath Basin Refuge Complex for their logistical assistance.

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Golden Gate Raptor Observatory 2009 Report

The Golden Gate Raptor Observatory celebrated its 25th anniversary this past October, with two days of what we called "Raptor Fest." We presented a mini symposium of GGRO research performed over the past 25 years, demonstrations and displays of our trapping procedures, banding demonstrations, a demonstration of study skin preparation, non-releasable "education birds" of several species were displayed, and a variety of children's activities. More than 450 visitors and friends attended the festivities.

Sandwiched on either side of the celebration was our usual fall raptor migration monitoring with 24,826 raptors counted, and 1,399 raptors of 10 species banded. Although the total was slightly below average, we did set a new high for Merlins banded at 62.

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Western Canada Cooperative Waterfowl Banding Program Willow Lake, Northwest Territories Report 2009

In 2009, the Tulita Renewable Resources Council (TRRC), the Government of the Northwest

Territories' Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) collaborated for the 15th consecutive year (1995-2009) of duck banding at Willow Lake (65°14' N; 125°25' W) in the Mackenzie River Valley, Sahtu Settlement Area, NWT. Our annual goal is to band 2000 Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*), 1500 Northern Pintail (*A. acuta*), and all incidentally captured ducks (up to 1000 per species) prior to the opening day of waterfowl hunting in the NWT (01 Sep). The USFWS, Sahtu Renewable Resources Board (SRRB), and ENR provided funding for the project. A Waterfowl Biologist (USFWS) supervised two contract Banding Assistants (TRRC) and two crew members hired by the SRRB.

A maximum of 24 funnel traps were set for a total of 486 trap-nights during 11 to 31 Aug. Trap success was 3.2 ducks per trap night. A total of 1803 kg (3975 lb) of barley was used as bait. Standard leg bands (Call 1-800-327-BAND) were placed on 1549 ducks: 895 Mallards (58% of all ducks banded), 511 Northern Pintails (33%), 90 American Green-winged Teal (*A. crecca*; 6%), 50 American Wigeon (*A. americana*; 3%), 2 Northern Shoveler (*A. clypeata*), and one Blue-winged Teal (*A. discors*).

The number of ducks banded in 2009 was 10.4% above the 1995-2009 average of 1388 ducks. The greatest one day catch of unbanded birds occurred on 13 Aug, and the greatest total catch in one day occurred on 25 Aug, with a catch of 225 ducks.

Willow Lake water levels were average to slightly above average for the 2009 season. Eighteen percent of banded ducks (N= 276) were in the hatch-year or local age-class, which is less than the 1995-2009 station average of 33% juvenile age class. Eighty-four recaptures were recorded, of which 16 were foreign recaptures and 68 recaptures of birds banded in prior years.

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