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## News, Notes, Comments

**Errata: NABB Oct-Dec 2013 Vol. 38, No. 4, page 148, 1st column, 3rd Confer literature citation J. L. Larken, should be J. L. Larkin.**

### BANDING PERMITS, A NEW PARADIGM?

Changes and rumors of change at the Bird Banding Lab (BBL) have been an almost continuous part of banding in my more than 50 years of being a bander. Recently, it seems that increasing number of stories have come to light about permits not being issued to qualified people; such stories are troubling to many folks. Of course, the increase of these stories may be due to our increasingly efficient electronic communication modes.

In a recent note from the BBL to bird banders, it states: "Despite rumors to the contrary, the BBL continues to issue new master permits and subpermits on a regular basis." While this is true, some folks certainly have had permit applications rejected. Information on these rejections has come from a few people, perhaps a dozen in all, via the Ornithological Council and the North

American Banding Council, both with representatives from all the ornithological organizations in North America. For a comment on this topic, search for "Could the days of free bird bands be coming to an end?" by Ellen Paul at [ornithologyexchange.org](http://ornithologyexchange.org).

On this subject, I would like to highly recommend that everyone interested in the permitting process read two very important documents: the Federal Advisory Committee's (FAC) report (Haseltine et al. 2008), and the BBL's more recent response to the 58 specific management recommendations in the FAC in Smith (2013). Specifically, as regards to permits, one of the responses indicated that the BBL is supporting "banding programs of scientists and managers while placing less emphasis on new "high-volume" banding operations that have limited scientific potential." But, even this direct response does not seem to clarify at least some of the nuances of the permit issuance question.

I propose to address two topics here: Is denial of permits a substantive issue and is denial always appropriate?