

A 12-year-old Osprey (608-49142) in Montana Provides Information on Dispersal

On 24 Jul 2014, Marco Restani (MR) banded two nestling Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*) at a territory located along the Clarks Fork Yellowstone River, Carbon County, MT (45°564333N, 108°814415W). Prior to banding, he noticed that the adult female Osprey wore two bands, a USGS band on the left leg and a faded color band on the right leg. He determined that the auxiliary band was bicolored silver over yellow on 1 Aug 2014, Peter J. Harmata (PJH) had banded the adult female as a nestling, and he knew from her band combination that she originated from one of five nests on the upper Missouri River, MT in 2002, which made her 12 years old.

Only 12% of female Ospreys reached 12+ years of age in Michigan (Postupalsky 1989), which motivated MR to obtain numbers on the USGS band to identify the female. MR read all eight digits on the USGS band with the aid of a 20-60X spotting scope on 5 August 2014. The adult female Osprey had been banded as a nestling on 25 July 2002 near Townsend, Broadwater County, MT. She had two siblings and was raised on a 230KV power pole (46.291560°N, 111.522623°W).

Her natal dispersal distance was approximately 225 km, which was greater than the mean distance (38 km) observed for female Ospreys in Michigan (Postupalsky 1989) and the median distance (135 km) observed for females in Sweden (Saurola 2005). However, her natal dispersal distance was shorter than maximum distances recorded from New England (>250 km, Poole 1989), Minnesota (1075 km, Martell et al. 2002), and Sweden (534 km, Saurola 2005). MR freed both of her nestlings from baling twine during banding in 2014; entanglement in twine accounted for an estimated 3.3% of nestling mortality within the Yellowstone River watershed in 2012 and 2013 (Seacor et al. 2014). Both nestlings fledged normally during the third week of Aug 2014 (Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society, unpublished data).

PJH banded only nine nestlings with the marker combination observed on the adult female Osprey (right leg = silver over yellow, left leg = USGS). An adult female Osprey, wearing bands with the same configuration as 608-49142, was photographed in 2012 at a territory only 6 km from the Clarks Fork nest (which was unoccupied in 2012 and 2013). The 2012 territory failed and was then unoccupied in 2013 and 2014. It was highly improbable the two similarly banded adult females were the same individuals, given the few nestlings banded with the same color combination and the advanced age of the Ospreys. If so, the 12-year-old female has also provided information on breeding dispersal (6 km) in Montana.

We thank NorthWestern Energy and Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative for providing bucket trucks to access Osprey nests. Osprey nestlings on the upper Missouri River were banded under A. R. Harmata's permit authority, and he reviewed the draft note. L. Bessasparis provided 2014 fledging data through cooperation with the Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society. The Hahn Ranch and L. Stevenson kindly granted access to private lands.

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Indigo Bunting: New Longevity Record and Documentation of Habitat Connectivity

The Black Swamp Bird Observatory began conducting mist netting research on bird migration in 1981 at the Navarre Marsh Station (41.5906° N, 83.0643° W), with daily study commencing in 1989. This site is located on property owned by First Energy, Ottawa County, OH, with a long-term management agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. The study site is Lake Erie beach ridge consisting of Carolinian Forest (Braun 1950). In 2008 the Black Swamp Bird Observatory initiated a new banding station on the Creek Bend Sandusky County Park (41.4102° N, 83.2286° W), Sandusky County, OH. This station resides in a small stream corridor that feeds into Sandusky Bay in the Western Basin of Lake Erie.

An Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*), band number 2171-48678, was first encountered on 23 May 2001 at the Navarre Marsh Station. It was banded as a second-year male and was recaptured at the same site on 28 May 2001. The bird was again encountered on 28 Sep 2013, when it was netted at the Creek Bend Station. This represents a longevity record of 13 yr and 3 mo, eclipsing the previous record of 9 yr and 2 mo, as reported by the Bird Banding Laboratory (Bird Banding Laboratory 2014).

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This recovery represents a distance of 24 km southwest from the original banding location.

This record is significant for several reasons. The average life span of an Indigo Bunting has been reported as 2.34 yr (Payne and Payne 1990), with an overall estimate of very low annual survival rate (Payne 1992). The present longevity record is more than five times the average life span and represents a nearly 33% increase in the documented longevity record. In addition, this single individual demonstrates the importance of habitat connectivity in the western basin of Lake Erie, especially in light of the ongoing development of elevated structures (i.e., wind turbines) in a significant stopover habitat region. Our long-term studies at these sites demonstrate an interaction between the lake shore habitat and inland sites as much as 25 km from the shoreline; in the past two years, four birds have been banded at the Navarre site and recaptured in later years at Creek Bend. The routine movements between lakeshore and inland sites were a surprising finding from our long-term research. That a single migrant bird has been documented using both lakeside and inland stopover sites demonstrates that both of these habitat types are important to migrants, and may serve as a cautionary tale in an era when both lakeshore and inland habitats are being eyed for wind turbine development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the many Black Swamp Bird Observatory staff and volunteers who have assisted in collecting this massive data set of passerine migration over the past 30 years. We also thank First Energy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Sandusky County Park District for the opportunity to operate these research stations on their properties. We thank Elliot Tramer, Andrew W. Jones, Keith Lott, Kristin Mylecraine, and Robert Gates for comments on this manuscript.

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