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The aims of the Ontario Bird Banding Association are the study of birds with emphasis on banding and other marking techniques, the promotion of ornithological investigations, the publication of scientific and educational papers pertaining to ornithology, and cooperation with organizations with similar objectives. Particular emphasis is placed on studies within the Province of Ontario. Focal points for field activities are the Long Point and Point Pelee Bird Observatories.

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING

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Donated in memory of
John O.L. Roberts

SPRING MIGRATION AT WHITEFISH POINT MICHIGAN, 1966-1970

Alice H. Kelley

3681 FOREST HILL DRIVE
BLOOMFIELD HILLS
MICHIGAN 48013, U.S.A.

J.O.L. Roberts

22 ROWANWOOD AVENUE
TORONTO 5, ONTARIO.

The Point Pelee Bird Observatory of the Ontario Bird Banding Association, under the direction of J.O. L. Roberts, had for several years carried on a study and banding programme for Sharp-shinned Hawks at Point Pelee, Ontario, where large numbers occur in fall. Spring flights do not follow the same route and when, in 1966, the Observatory began a similar spring programme, Whitefish Point in the upper peninsula of Michigan was chosen for the study (Roberts, 1966).

The programme was intended to furnish data on Sharp-shinned Hawks and their migration which would complement that gathered at Point Pelee in autumn. Detailed objectives were established relating to various aspects of occurrence, migration, behaviour and measurements of this species and to differences among age and sex classes. In the first year of operation, several interesting observations on other

species were also made (Roberts, 1966). As a result, the objectives were expanded to include phenology of occurrence of owls, especially Boreal Owls, by netting at night. All hawk species, jays, chickadees and loons were also singled out for attention but by observation rather than by trapping.

Whitefish Point is a broad peninsula in Chippewa Co., Michigan, extending generally east into Lake Superior toward the mainland of Canada about 15-20 miles distant. Flights of hawks had long been known to occur there in spring; writers had mentioned large flights and the slaughter of hawks which had taken place before the repeal of the bounty law in 1922 (Wood, 1914; Magee, 1922; Tyrrell, 1934). The end of the point is a barren gravel beach extending to a dune area with sparse grasses and sedges; beyond this is an area of shrubs interspersed with jack-pine (Pinus banksiana). Farther up the point is a heavier woodland where sizable jack-pines are mixed with deciduous trees. A Coast Guard station near the tip includes a lighthouse and several other buildings. The Observatory's banding trailer was located on this property.

BANDING

Birds were captured for banding chiefly by mist nets of 3 3/4" mesh, 18 metres long with two shelves, suitable for hawks. In 1966 six to eight nets were usually operated from 0500 to mid-afternoon with only occasional operation at night. In subsequent years the number of nets in use was increased, and from 1968 through 1970 24-hour operation was the normal procedure. Nets of finer mesh were used to capture smaller birds as time, available personnel, and weather conditions permitted.

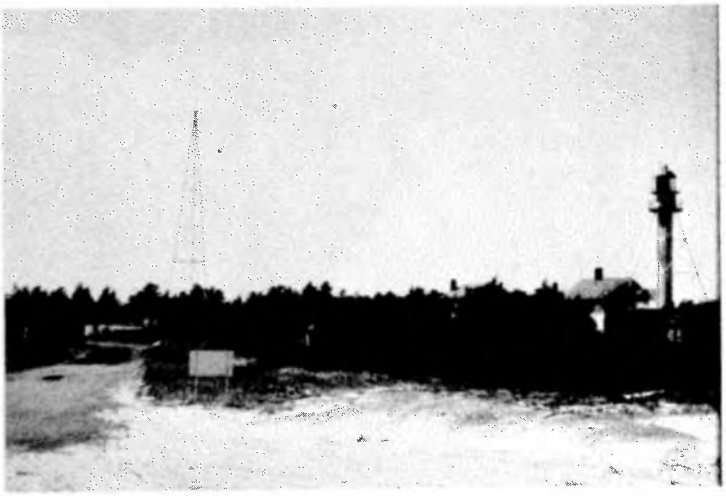

Fig. I. Coast Guard buildings, Whitefish Point

Data taken for Sharp-shinned Hawks included age, sex, eye colour, condition of moult, weight as well as tail, wing and tarsus lengths. Weight and some measurements were also taken on most other raptors.

Coverage generally spanned a four to five week period starting after mid-April and ending after mid-May. However, in 1969 it was limited to a nine-day period in April. Coverage and number of large mesh nets used are summarized in table 1.

During the five-year period 3,523 birds were banded representing 74 species. Annual totals for raptor species and for other species taken in large mesh nets in significant numbers are shown in table-2 together with totals for the remaining non-passerines and passerines, respectively.

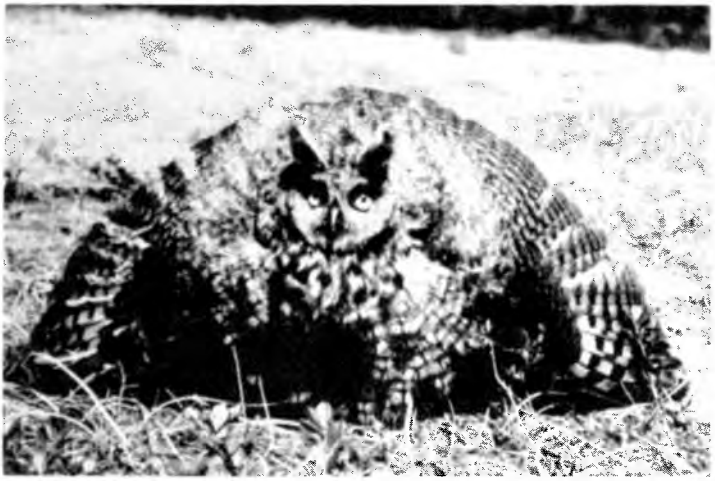

Fig. II. Long-eared Owl

Five species (Sharp-shinned Hawk, Blue Jay, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Long-eared Owl and Saw-whet Owl) accounted for almost 90% of the individuals taken in large-mesh nets. Fringillidae accounted for about 60% of the small passerines banded, of which 75% were White-throated Sparrows and Slate-colored Juncos.

RECOVERIES AND RETURNS

Table 3 shows recoveries of birds which were banded at Whitefish Point and table 4 shows foreign birds retaken there. The numbers used under "recovery" are as employed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to designate method of recovery, i.e. 00: found dead; 01: shot; 13: hit stationary objects; 89: trapped and released; 98: no information. The only return was a Gray Jay (823-65264) banded at Whitefish Point May 22, 1966 and retrapped May 17,1967.

OBSERVATIONS

Special effort was made during the project to observe hawks of all species, to count or estimate numbers of each and to record their behaviour. Other species were identified and counted as time and personnel available permitted, although jays, chickadees and loons received extra attention.

During the five year period 150 species were observed or banded. The annotated list which follows later summarizes data on their abundance and periods of migration, together with details of significant observations.

PRINCIPAL REGULAR MOVEMENTS

Hawks

Movement of hawks was under way at the point each year when operations began (earliest April 16, 1967); the onset of this movement has not been determined. Migration has been recorded at the Straits of Mackinac at least as early as April 13 (Sheldon, 1965). In 1967 Chief Reade at the Whitefish Point Coastguard station reported a hawk migration on April 1, but noticed none thereafter until April 13. Large buteos evidently comprise most of the migration before mid-April.

Typically hawks of all species appear over the point from the west and continue over the lake in the direction of flight or turn back over land heading west or southwest. Although movements sometimes occur to the limits of visibility, most hawks approach the lake at a height which allows identification, often without binoculars.

Rough-legged, Red-tailed and Sharp-shinned Hawks were present consistently, at times in large numbers. Whereas major movements of the two buteo species occurred in winds from almost every direction, the larger Sharp-shin movements of both types were associated with more or less southerly winds (southeast through west). All three species disappeared over the lake in a wide variety of winds, both following and opposed; although on any particular occasion the routes taken by the three species were usually similar, the buteos would occasionally continue over the lake when Sharp-shins were returning along the shore.

Broad-winged Hawks were noted sporadically each year, usually high up in characteristic "kettles" which would recede up the point without reaching the tip. At times they were seen leaving the peninsula over the water some distance back from the end of the point, at least twice in a cloudless sky. During foggy and rainy weather Broad-winged Hawks roosted in the woods, one year as late as the first week of June (Kelley, 1969).

Wood (1914) found many Cooper's Hawks among the carcasses of birds shot at Whitefish Point. Although the species was noted regularly each year from 1966 to 1970, numbers were small and it is evidently a less common migrant at the point today than formerly.

Occasionally sizable numbers of hawks were grounded at the point, usually by fog. Otherwise they seldom lingered in the area, although from time to time Sharp-shins hunted briefly through the woods allowing the capture of some in mist nets.

Owls

The presence of good numbers of owls at the

point was discovered unexpectedly in 1966 when nets were operated at night and individuals of several species captured. In subsequent years greater effort was made to trap owls with considerable success. Long-eared and Saw-whet owls were present at the beginning of the banding period each year, and are evidently regular migrants; the peak of their migrations may occur earlier. Barred Owls were also caught each year but in small numbers.

Yellow-shafted Flicker

A movement of flickers was noted throughout the banding period; the species was most common between April 26 and May 6. The birds, though numerous, did not seem to arrive in flocks, nor were they seen in a flight leaving the point over the lake.

Loons

The migration of loons was practically continuous, sometimes over the water beyond the shoreline, sometimes right over the point. Regardless of wind direction they seemed to head directly north, usually in twos but occasionally in a straggling line. Counts were difficult to obtain because of other activities and the continuous movement. All the individuals specifically identified were Common Loons.

Blue Jay

Blue Jays were known to gather at the point in large numbers in spring (Tyrrell, 1934), and this large influx was evident each year of the banding project. No jays were seen before April 25 and they remained scarce until near mid-May. After this large groups would appear, moving down the point, often

Fig. III. Whitefish Point looking south-west.

starting over the water only to return as if by signal to plummet into the trees (and nets) near the end of the point. At times the flight would be seen actually leaving the point to continue over the water. Because of the method of movement and the fact that the flocks were at times high to the limits of visibility, numbers were difficult to establish. In 1966 there were evidently many thousands. Concentrations apparently did not reach the same proportions in later years; this may be at least partly because operations ceased before the peak of the Blue Jay movement.

Small Passerines

Migration of small passerines was generally unremarkable. Fringillids predominated; White-throated Sparrows and Slate-colored Juncos were the most numerous grounded species while Evening Grosbeaks,

Fig. IV. Boreal Owl

Purple Finches and other winter finches were often overhead. Golden and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Brown Creepers, and modest numbers of thrushes and warblers comprised most of the remaining individuals seen or trapped.

An influx of warblers and other passerines on May 18 and 19, 1968, following two days of rain and fog, added a sizable number of species that were not otherwise recorded.

IRREGULAR MOVEMENTS OF NORTHERN SPECIES

As expected, northern species which appear irregularly in Michigan were recorded.

Since only five Boreal Owls had been recorded since 1940 (Zimmerman and Van Tyne, 1959; Cuthbert, 1963) the numbers taken were surprising as was the

appearance of the species in every year but one. The distribution of captures suggests a cyclic pattern of occurrence. It may be significant that the abundance of both species of chickadee appears to follow a somewhat similar pattern as indicated in table 5.

Boreal Chickadees were not reported abundant in any year, perhaps because coverage ended too early. Wood (1914) found large flocks on May 27, 1914 when only a few had been present earlier.

Gray Jays occurred in numbers only in 1966 when 43 were banded. The only one trapped in subsequent years was a return in 1967. None were seen in any year before May 14.

In 1968 a Great Gray Owl was captured; no influx had been reported in Michigan or other northern states the preceding winter. Snowy owls were present in 1966 and 1968.

OUT-OF-RANGE OR SOUTHERN SPECIES

A few birds were recorded which could be considered to be generally outside their range at Whitefish Point.

Turkey Vultures were reported each year, although they were thought to occur rarely as far north as Lake Superior (Zimmerman and Van Tyne, 1959).

Single Mockingbirds were observed in June, 1969 and April, 1970; the status of this species in Michigan is uncertain, though generally found to the south. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers have seldom been recorded in the upper peninsula of Michigan (one recent record from Whitefish Point in the fall of 1958; Wallace, 1959); two were present in mid-May of 1968 during an

Fig. V. Great Gray Owl

influx of small passerines. The Rufous-sided Towhee, also considered rare and local in the upper peninsula (Zimmerman and Van Tyne, 1959), was seen in 1968. Two Lark Sparrows were seen on May 21, 1967, the first published occurrence for the U.P. since 1931 (Zimmerman and Van Tyne, 1959).

RESULTS AND PLANS

Iris colour data taken on Sharp-shinned Hawks in 1966 and 1967 were analysed, together with more extensive fall data from Point Pelee, and related to age and sex (Roberts, 1967). Iris colour is evidently a general indicator of age for several years after birth and can be used to age some individuals

precisely up to at least their third spring and to identify some others as older than this. Much of the other data obtained on Sharp-shinned Hawks have been analysed and further papers incorporating them are planned. The number of foreign recoveries obtained so far has been disappointingly low.

An analysis and interpretation of the data obtained on the occurrence of owls is awaiting publication. (Kelley & Roberts, in press).

It is planned to continue the study of Sharp-shinned Hawks and of owls in 1971 while experimenting with an earlier start to operations, despite the discouraging amount of snow usually present in the first half of April. It is also planned to experiment with Bal-chatris and Bow-nets with a view to the possible development of a study on one or more additional species of hawk.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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TABLE 1

TRAPPING COVERAGE

	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
First date	Apr.23	Apr.16	Apr.21	Apr.19	Apr.21
Last date	May 22	May 21	May 19	Apr.27	May 16
Days nets set	27	35	29	9	26
Average No. Hawk Nets per day	6.7	7.6	9.7	12.0	10.1
Nights nets set	7	18	23	9	25

ANNUAL BANDING TOTALS

	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	TOTAL
Goshawk				1	1	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	94	209	295	35	318	951
Cooper's Hawk	1		1		2	4
Red-tailed Hawk				2	2	4
Red-shouldered Hawk		1			1	2
Broad-winged Hawk	1		1		3	5
Marsh Hawk	1	2	1	2	4	10
Pigeon Hawk	1					1
Sparrow Hawk	1	1		8	1	11
Sub-total	99	213	298	48	332	990
Barred Owl	1	5	1	3	3	13
Great Gray Owl			1			1
Long-eared Owl	4	19	26	23	52	124
Short-eared Owl	1					1
Boreal Owl	13	3		6	11	33
Saw-whet Owl	8	13	11	37	18	87
Sub-total	27	40	39	69	84	259

Yellow-shafted Flicker	33	41	48	32	37	191
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	5	7	11	2	27
American Woodcock	1	5	6	3	4	19
Whippoorwill	3		7		9	19
Other non-passerines	3	1	4	3	7	18
Sub-total	42	52	72	49	59	274
Gray Jay	43					43
Blue Jay	150	99	200		15	464
Other passerines	124	352	386	296	335	1493
Sub-total	317	451	586	296	350	2000
Total	485	756	995	462	825	3523

TABLE 3

RECOVERIES OF BIRDS

Band No.	Species	Age/ Sex	Banded
617-24605	Goshawk	HYU	04/21/69
833-64805	Sharp-shinned Hawk	SYF	05/08/68
633-48981	Sharp-shinned Hawk	ASYF	04/20/67
533-11578*	Sharp-shinned Hawk	SYF	05/08/66
653-49751	Sharp-shinned Hawk	SYF	04/26/68
983=40247	Sharp-shinned Hawk	SYM	05/08/68
505-32877	Cooper's Hawk	SYM	05/10/68
566-95534	Long-eared Owl	AHYU	05/02/68
566-95514	Long-eared Owl	AHYU	05/20/66

* number wrongly printed in 1966 report (511 instead of 533)

BANDED AT WHITEFISH POINT

Recovered	Place	Recovery
02/26/70	2E Stevens Point (Wisc) (443-0893)	00
04/30/69	Cheboygan (Mich) (453-0842)	00
10/16/67	2N Wanamaker (Pa) (404-0755)	89
05/13/66	Manistique (Mich) (455-0861)	13
10/12/68	19E Fayetteville (Tenn) (351-0861)	01
10/10/68	Nr. Cedar Grove (Wisc) (433-0874)	89
10/19/68	6S College Sta. (Tex) (303-0962)	01
01/99/69	Nr. Onalaska (Wisc) (435-0911)	98
06/42/68	Nr. La Sarre (Que) (484-0791)	01

TABLE 4

RECOVERIES AT WHITEFISH POINT OF BIRDS BANDED ELSEWHERE

Band No.	Species	Age/ Sex	Place	Banded	Recovered	Recovery
613-54480	Sharp-shinned Hawk	HYF	Nr.Cedar Grove (Wis.)	09/24/65	05/05/66	89
693-83781	Sharp-shinned Hawk	HYM	Nr.Merlin(Ont)	10/02/67	05/17/68	89
633-49331	Sharp-shinned Hawk	HYF	Pt.Pelee (Ont)	09/17/68	05/01/70	89
673-47526	Sharp-shinned Hawk	HYF	Nr.Cedar Grove (Wis.)	09/27/64	05/11/70	89
686-92975	Herring Gull	LU	Nr.Mackinac Is. (Mich.)	06/28/66	05/20/67	00
115-27676	Bl.-cap.Chickadee	AHYU	Nr.Coddington (Wis.)	01/27/70	05/07/70	89

TABLE 5

Annual Occurrence of Boreal Owls and of Chickadees
(Indices of abundance expressed as
percent of maximum for the species)

	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Boreal owl (1)	100	13	0	19	23
Black-capped Chickadee (2)	100	3	0	23	63
Boreal Chickadee (3)	+	0	0	+	+

(1) derived from numbers captured as a proportion of all owl captures.
(2) derived from numbers banded as a proportion of all small passerines banded.
(3) Reported (+), not reported (0).

ANNOTATED LIST

The following list of 150 species is a summary of banding and observations for the five-year period. It furnishes data on abundance, periods of migration, and details of unusual observations. An asterisk indicates that the species was banded.

Common Loon: Consistent throughout period, occasionally in sizable groups; max. 48 (1966), 41 (1970).

Horned Grebe: Recorded only in 1967: seven birds in early May.

Double-crested Cormorant: Single birds on 30 April 1970 and 14 May 1967.

Great Blue Heron: Small numbers (max. 12), most in late April.

American Bittern: Two reports in late April.

Canada Goose: 20 April 1967 (200); 23 April 1968 (250).

Blue Goose: Single on 30 April 1970

Black Duck: 24 April 1968 (2).

Gadwall: Pair on local pond 25 April 1966.

Pintail: 26 April 1968 (30).

Blue-winged Teal: Reported in small numbers through early May.

Scaup (sp.): 30 April 1966 (8); 21 in mid-May 1967.

American Goldeneye: Small numbers in late April in 1966 and 1967.

Bufflehead: 29 April 1967 (2).

Oldsquaw: 14 May 1967 (25).

White-winged Scoter: 22 May 1966 (35); 12 May 1968 (5).

Common Merganser: Several from 23 April - 14 May.

Red-breasted Merganser: Up to 150 in mid-May, 1967.

Turkey Vulture: Recorded each year (latest, 6 May), max. 5; considered rare in the U.P.

* Goshawk: Nine individuals reported, five on 25 April, 1970.

* Sharp-shinned Hawk: Present throughout period, often abundant; several counts of 400 - 1,000 birds.

* Cooper's Hawk: Reported consistently through 19 May, max. 8 - 12 individuals.

* Red-tailed Hawk: Numerous, becoming less so after 10 May; several reports of 200 birds.

* Red-shouldered Hawk: Generally uncommon; large groups only in 1967 (60 on 1 May, 10 on 2 May, 20 on 14 May.

* Broad-winged Hawk: Usually seen in flocks, most numerous 1 - 14 May, max. 1,500 on 6 May 1968.

Rough-legged Hawk: Migrated consistently; several reports of 200 - 300 birds.

Bald Eagle: 22 April 1970 (2).

* Marsh Hawk: Seen in small numbers until 15 May.

Osprey: A few (1 - 6) seen each year, last 8 May.

Peregrine Falson: Two birds in 1966, two in 1970.

* Pigeon Hawk: Recorded only in 1966 (singles on 2 and 17 May, 10 on 30 April).

* Sparrow Hawk: Regular; max. 40 on 25 April 1970.

Spruce Grouse: 20 May 1966 (1).

* Ruffed Grouse: 6 May 1966 (2), singles on 26 and 28 April 1970.

Sandhill Crane: Reported consistently until 15 May, usually in groups of 1 - 3 birds.

* Kildeer: Observed throughout period (one nest found).

Black-bellied Plover: 27 April 1967 (1); 19 May 1968 (1).

* Woodcock: Common throughout period; several banded.

* Common Snipe: Few reported, max. 5 on 25 April 1968.

Spotted Sandpiper: Three reports, all after 20 May.

Greater Yellowlegs: 2 May 1968 (1).

Dunlin: 15 May 1968 (5).

Marbled Godwit: one on 29 April 1970 (Rupert); rare in Michigan in spring.

Iceland Gull: One on 20 May 1967 (Roberts).

Herring Gull: The common gull in the area, sometimes numerous.

Ring-billed Gull: Reported only occasionally.

* Mourning Dove: Scattered reports of single birds.

Great Horned Owl: 13 May 1970 (1).

Snowy Owl: 28 April 1966 (1); 24 April 1968 (4).

* Barred Owl: Present each year, small numbers banded.

* Great Gray Owl: One banded on 28 April 1968 by Lamb and Douville.

* Long-eared Owl: Present each year in considerable numbers (124 banded).

* Short-eared Owl: One banded on 5 May 1966.

* Boreal Owl: Present each year except 1968 in surprising numbers (33 banded).

* Saw-whet Owl: Banded each year, max. 12 on 24 April 1969.

* Whip-poor-will: Scattered records from 6 - 22 May, scarce in 1967.

Chimney Swift: Small numbers 5 - 21 May; one larger group (40) on 21 May 1966.

* Belted Kingfisher: One or two birds on various dates; probably local.

* Yellow-shafted Flicker: Reported consistently, most numerous 26 April - 6 May, max. 150 birds.

* Pileated Woodpecker: Seven records; one banded 13 May 1970.

Red-headed Woodpecker: 13 May 1968 (2).

* Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Present throughout period in small numbers.

* Hairy Woodpecker: 21 May 1966 (2); 10 May 1968 (1).

* Downy Woodpecker: Single birds in 1966, 1969, and 1970.

Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: One on 19 May 1967 (McCleary).

Eastern Kingbird: One or two each year from 8 - 20 May.

* Great Crested Flycatcher: Singles on 18 May 1967 and 10 May 1968.

* Eastern Phoebe: Single birds in each of three years.

* Least Flycatcher: Three records, all after 4 May.

Horned Lark: Three reports of small numbers in late April.

Tree Swallow: Recorded from 23 April - 15 May, max. 25.

Bank Swallow: Single bird on 17 May 1967.

Barn Swallow: Small numbers after 7 May.

Purple Martin: Single birds on 30 April and 5 May 1968.

* Gray Jay: Reported from 14 May through 7 June; particularly numerous from 20 - 22 May 1966.

* Blue Jay: First date April 25, then seen in increasing numbers with peak from 14 - 22 May; present through 9 June.

Common Raven: Regular:max. 30 on 21 April 1970.

Common Crow: Present throughout period.

* Black-capped Chickadee: First 24 April; uncommon until mid-May, then often numerous.

* Boreal Chickadee: Two groups of 15 birds on 30 April and 2 May 1970; otherwise in small numbers into June.

* Red-breasted Nuthatch: Reported in 1966 and 1970 in early May.

* Brown Creeper: Regular from 23 April through 13 May.

* Winter Wren: Five records of single birds.

Mockingbird: Single birds on 3 June 1969 (Kelley) and 27 April 1970 (Wyett).

Catbird: 18 May 1967 (2); only record.

* Brown Thrasher: Small numbers after 4 May.

* Robin: Regular; max. 100 on 21 April 1968.

* Wood Thrush: Recorded each year except 1969; max. 5 in 1968.

* Hermit Thrush: Regular from 16 April, max. 25 on 22 April 1968.

* Swainson's Thrush: A few records after 16 May.

* Veery: Reported in small numbers in mid-May.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Roberts observed single birds on 15 and 16 May 1968.

* Golden-crowned Kinglet: Common from 19 April through end of month.

* Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Reported from 19 April through 20 May, peak from 12 - 15 May.

Water Pipit: 4 May 1968 (1); 21 May 1967 (3).

Cedar Waxwing: 22 May 1967 (1).

Starling: Common; max. 118 on 19 May 1967.

* Solitary Vireo: One banded on 5 May 1970.

Philadelphia Vireo: 14 May 1967 (1).

* Black-and-white Warbler: Few records, first 6 May.

* Orange-crowned Warbler: 15 May 1968 (1); 16 May 1967 (1).

* Nashville Warbler: Reported in three years, first 7 May.

Parula Warbler: A male was seen on 15 May 1968.

Magnolia Warbler: A few reports after 16 May.

* Cape May Warbler: One banded 12 May 1970.

* Black-throated Blue Warbler: Four birds, first 13 May.

* Myrtle Warbler: Regular after 24 April, peak 12 - 15 May.

Black-throated Green Warbler: 13 May 1968 (1).

Blackburnian Warbler: 17 May 1967 (1); 19 May 1968 (1).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: 15 May 1968 (2).

* Palm Warbler: Single birds in three years.

* Ovenbird: Six birds from 15 - 20 May.

Northern Waterthrush: 13 May 1968 (1).

Mourning Warbler: One on 13 May 1968 with influx of passerines.

Yellowthroat: 12 May 1968 (1).

* Wilson's Warbler: One banded on 19 May 1968.

Canada Warbler: 19 May 1968 (4).

American Redstart: 19 May 1968 (4).

House Sparrow: Reported only in 1967, after mid-May.

Bobolink: Two on 19 May 1968.

Eastern Meadowlark: Four birds in 1968.

* Red-winged Blackbird: Regular after 19 April.

* Baltimore Oriole: 17 May 1967 (1); 19 May 1968 (5).

Rusty Blackbird: Recorded in small numbers in 1968 and 1970.

* Common Grackle: Regular after 21 April, max. 230 birds.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Common; max. 215 on 19 May 1968.

* Scarlet Tanager: One banded on 19 May 1968.

* Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Few each year, first 13 May.

Evening Grosbeak: Regular after 25 April, max. 100 on 13 May 1968.

* Purple Finch: Regular after 18 April, sometimes numerous (up to 100 birds).

* Pine Siskin: Numerous only in 1968: two groups of 100 birds on 2 and 12 May.

American Goldfinch: First 18 April in flocks of 20 - 100 birds.

Red Crossbill: 5 May 1968 (10).

* Rufous-sided Towhee: 7 May 1968 (1); 13 May 1968 (2).

* Savannah Sparrow: Scattered reports from 21 April through 20 May.

Le Conte's Sparrow: On 4 May 1967 a bird was found in the talons of a netted Sharp-shinned Hawk (specimen Royal Ontario Museum).

* Vesper Sparrow: Generally small numbers from 5 May.

Lark Sparrow: Two birds observed by Roberts on 21 May 1967.

* Slate-colored Junco: Regular and common from beginning of period.

* Tree Sparrow: Recorded from 16 April - 13 May, most in late April.

* Chipping Sparrow: First 29 April; common after 10 May.

Harris' Sparrow: A male was seen on 18 - 19 May 1967 (McCleary).

* White-crowned Sparrow: First 1 May, common after 10 May (max. 150 on 18 May 1967).

* White-throated Sparrow: Common from 16 April through 1 May.

* Fox Sparrow: Most reported from 16 April - 1 May.

* Lincoln's Sparrow: Five reports of single birds from 6 - 12 May.

* Swamp Sparrow: Scattered reported after 21 April.

* Song Sparrow: Regular, generally in small numbers.

Lapland Longspur: 30 April 1968 (1); 3 May 1967 (1).

Snow Bunting: A few birds until 25 April.

WOUNDED RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD RECOVERS

Kenneth W. Prescott

NEW JERSEY STATE MUSEUM, CULTURAL CENTER COMPLEX
WEST STATE STREET, TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625.

On 10 April 1971, at my Pennington, New Jersey, Banding Station I trapped and banded an interesting Red-winged Blackbird (Agelaius phoeniceus): ASY-M, #742-08406, 66.2 gms., fat content 0 (0-3 scale). Although very badly wounded, it had recovered fully and flew strongly when released. The upper mandible had been struck and the anterior half was missing, the right eyeball was missing and contained a slight festering infection, the right side of the neck and right breast had fully healed scabs over circular wounds. The size and shape of the flesh wounds, and the damage to the eye all on the right side plus, of course, the damaged beak strongly suggest that a pattern of shot had struck the bird.

In no manner did the blackbird appear sickly or weak. Before removing it from the trap, I observed it picking up grain with the damaged beak by sliding the mandibles slightly sidewise. It also pinched my finger authoritatively with the sidewise motion so that it appeared to me that the bird had adapted successfully to an unusual situation in a manner that allowed it to sustain life, heal its severe wounds and survive during, at least part of, a winter season. It is impossible to judge the approximate date of the injury, but surely several weeks and perhaps as long as two months may have elapsed to allow the wounds to heal. I made no exploratory probes for suspected shot

and I was unable to detect by sight or touch the presence of shot.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

On May 9th, 1971, at Long Point Bird Observatory, I retrapped an adult male Redwinged Blackbird (692-14957) with a grossly deformed bill. The lower mandible was skewed about 4 mm to the right at the tip (see illustration), and at no point did the cutting edges of the two mandibles meet.

Drawing by B. K. MacKay
from a photograph by A.D. Brewer

Nevertheless the bird seemed in excellent health, and in fact weighed more than the average for the adult male Redwings which I was trapping at the time. The same bird was retrapped twice a few days previously by M. Bradstreet; the variation in weight, given below, does not seem significant.

Date	Time	Weight (g)
May 4	0730	71.4
May 6	0900	72.8
May 9	1115	68.0

The bird was originally banded, as an adult, in the same place on April 14, 1969; it is not known whether it was deformed at that time.

Unlike Dr. Prescott's bird, this Redwing was not seen to feed, so how it overcame its deformity is not known; however, it was quite obvious that it was unable to pick up small objects in the usual fashion.

Bird-banders have a unique opportunity to study deformities, both congenital ones and those caused by injury, in wild bird populations. In particular, the retrapping of abnormal birds yields interesting information on the ability of wild birds to recover from disabilities, or to adapt their behaviour to overcome them. We would urge all banders to keep a look-out for abnormal birds, and to note any peculiarities they might find.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

SANDERLING

During the autumn migration of 1971, the Long Point Bird Observatory hopes to band and colour-mark several hundred Sanderling at Long Point, Ontario. Information on the movement of these birds away from Long Point will facilitate research presently under way on the energy requirements of their migration. We would appreciate it if everyone sighting these birds would report their observations to: Long Point Bird Observatory, 269 Beta Street, Toronto 14, Ontario, Canada.

The following information would be appreciated:
Date and time of observation
Location, including nearest city or town
Colours: note--birds will be coloured on the breast and the abdomen with two of the following colours: red, orange, pink, purple, yellow, green, blue, brown, black,and white (no colour) .
Leg that has been banded: this will tell if the bird is an adult or an immature.

Any other information on what other birds are with the marked individuals would be very useful.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS

As part of the study programme of the Black-crowned Night-heron in the Luther Marsh, near Arthur, Ontario, nestlings have been colour-banded. Any person seeing a marked bird is kindly requested to inform Dr. A. D. Brewer, 277 Arthur St. N., Guelph, Ontario, giving details of location, date, colour of band and which leg it is on, and any other relevant information.

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING

EDITOR Dr. A. D. Brewer
277 Arthur St. N.,
Guelph, Ontario. 824-4342

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Although emphasis is placed on material of interest to banders, manuscripts of articles or short notes dealing with any aspect of ornithology are welcomed. Manuscripts should be typewritten and double spaced. Tables and figures should be prepared on separate sheets. Photographs should have good contrast for successful reproduction.

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