

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

Observatories: Long Point Bird Observatory, Point Pelee Bird Observatory, Publication: Ontario Bird Banding.



DECEMBER 1984 NEWSLETTER

Please send articles to
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4-64 Cedar Street
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BANDER'S INPUT WANTED FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT

*** The article below is the summary of a letter sent to Chris Risely in August of this year ***

The Ontario Waste Management Corporation has recently announced the selection of eight candidate sites for location of a waste treatment facility. The next step in the selection process is a detailed comparative evaluation of sites and the selection of preferred sites.

In order to compare and select a preferred site, Wayne Weller of Gartner Lee Associates Limited is seeking information from special interest groups, such as OBBA, as well as naturalist clubs, knowledgeable field naturalists and local experts.

Specifically, Mr. Weller is seeking information for all eight sites on vegetation, forestry, fish and wildlife resource occurrence; uncommon and rare species; significant or sensitive species and habitats in both aquatic and terrestrial settings. Any information members of the OBBA could provide on use (eg. research, bird watching etc.) of these resources would be of value to him.

The eight candidate sites are located in Peel, Halton and Niagara Regional Municipalities. If you know of any information that would be of use, please contact Wayne Weller at Gartner Lee Associates Ltd., Toronto-Buttonville Airport, Markham Ontario, L3P 3J9. (1-416-477-8400)

Two of the sites are south of HWY 20 , one East and one West of Bismark. Another two are slightly West of the QEW midway between HWY 20 and HWY 3. Three other sites are south of Milton , approximately midway between HWY 401 and the QEW near HWY 25. Another site appears to be in the North-West corner of Brampton slightly East of HWY 10 .

I do have more precise information on the exact location of these sites. If you want precise locations call the editor at 1-519-821-2549.

CWS COLOUR-MARKING OF TERNS STUDY

The Canadian Wildlife Service, Ontario Region, is continuing its program of color-marking Common Terns at two colonies in the lower Great Lakes to determine their post-breeding dispersal, migration routes and winter range.

In 1981 adults were marked with orange wing-tags and chicks with pink tags. Tags were put on both wings of all birds. All tags had combinations of letters and numbers (the two tags on any bird each had the same combination). In addition, all birds received a metal legband on one leg and a plastic legband (yellow with a black horizontal stripe) on the other leg.

In 1982 many of the adult tagged birds returned to their colonies still carrying their tags. The tagged birds appeared fit and nested normally. Most tags were still clearly legible and showed little wear. In 1982 bright blue wing tags (with black lettering) were put on adult Common Terns and black tags (with yellow lettering) on chicks prior to fledging.

In 1983 many terns tagged in 1981 and 1982 were back at their colonies. In that year, red wing tags (with yellow lettering) were put on adult Common Terns and green tags (with yellow lettering) on chicks.

In 1984 several terns tagged as adults in previous years were back at the nesting colonies. In addition, a few immatures tagged in 1981 returned to nest as adults. In 1984 white tags (with red trim and red lettering) were put on adult Common Terns and yellow tags (with black lettering) on chicks.

When you observe a tagged tern would you please report the date, location, colour of the tag, and, if possible, the number/letter combination to : **BANDING OFFICE, CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE, HEADQUARTERS, OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA, K1A 0E7.** All reports will be acknowledged.

FRIENDSHIP BEADS FOR BANDERS --- Bruce Duncan

Here's a suggestion for everyone who keeps bands on the wire or string as they arrive from the Bird Banding Office. I admit to being one of these people even though that may reflect laziness, disorganization or an inability to think up ways of stringing bands for easier handling. The one problem with this matter other than having half-a-dozen zeros scatter in the grass at your feet each time you try to remove a single band from the wire, is knowing which end of the wire you want. With poor light and deteriorating eyesight, its not always easy to read the smaller numbers. I loop the wire over two bands at the "wrong" end of the string and keep it over only one at the "correct" end: this simplifies things immensely.

Another solution is walking around on almost every elementary-school-aged child's sneakers. Those little "friendship beads" strung on their shoelaces can be looped singly on the "wrong" end of a series of bands and act as a colourful reminder of which end to work from. I recommend buying a

small package of beads rather than stealing the requisite number from your children's shoes in the middle of the night ... or , try to finagle them by being friendly; after all, that's what they're called. I'm sure there are lots of other ways of marking strings of bands but I've found these two quite satisfactory.

A TOO FRIENDLY KESTREL --- David Lamble

During the winter of 1983 , I was fortunate enough to capture and band, two, male, American Kestrels in my backyard. The first was banded on January 20, the second on February 19. Both were AHY birds .

The first one was a gorgeous fellow with a-typical behaviour patterns. He was not very aggressive when handled. He did not claw me very much and sat reasonably quietly for photographs. In fact, he was a perfect gentleman !!!!

The second Kestrel was much more typical and my left hand was heavily scratched before he was released.

At any rate, during January and February of this year I was again bothered by a male Kestrel. He was a magnificent flyer who began his visits early in January and made number of successful attacks on my banding station. He seemed to know exactly how to avoid my Bal-Chatri trap. I would watch carefully from my back-door see him make a pass ---I would rush out and set the Bal-Chatri and he would never return. Yet, he did not seem to be afraid of me -- since he made a pass at birds in my Potter traps once when I was taking Goldfinches out of adjacent traps.

However, we got lucky on March 13 and he came back and succumbed to the lure of my Bal-Chatri.

I was most surprised to find it was my January 20 bird from 1983. His wing chord was a little longer and he had put on a little weight, but he was still that gentle bird I had captured in the previous winter. Again he did not claw or bite particularly and once again posed "happily" for pictures before his release. This lovely bird was released a couple of miles away from my feeders and did not return that winter.

I do not know if such a return is common for a Kestrel. I am intrigued by his behaviour -- such an efficient killing machine , yet so gentle when handled. Even my three young daughters crowding around him did not cause him to cry out or strike out . I am also interested in his behaviour around my Potter traps -- did the first capture affect his hunting techniques?

At any rate, I am looking forward to the snows of winter. 'Cause just maybe, I might see this special little bird again .

CHINESE NOW STARTING BANDING PROGRAMME

*** This article was taken without permission from the Hong Kong Standard of August 14, 1983.

China's first 1,000 tagged birds will fly this autumn from Qinghai province to their winter homes in and outside China, Guangming Daily reported.

In early August, the paper said, 16 scientists and workers from the China national bird-tagging centre and Qinghai province tied bands to the legs of 1,036 bar-headed geese and great black-headed gulls on the bird island -- a small island on Qinghai Lake.

Wildlife protection departments throughout China will report to the national bird-tagging centre when the banded and registered birds are found.

According to international tradition, wildlife protection organizations in other countries and regions on the birds migratory routes will also report to the Chinese centre.

China has signed an agreement for protection of migratory birds with Japan. The Chinese Wildlife Protection Department has informed its Japanese counterpart of these banded birds, the paper said.

The project is aimed at studying bird migration, the paper said. The study is also indispensable to aviation protection.

The 27 hectare bird island on Qinghai Lake -- designated as a bird sanctuary in recent years -- is inhabited by about 100,000 birds of 20 species, mainly bar-headed geese and great black-headed gulls.

O.B.B.A. SNOW BUNTING PROJECT --- Wayne Ferguson

For the last few years, the OBBA has been conducting a study of the winter movements of Snow Buntings. The study consists of banding and colour marking Snow Buntings with pink, yellow or green dye. The marking programme is being carried on in various locations in Ontario.

If you see a colour marked Snow Bunting, please record the date, colour and location and send it on to the Bird Banding Office. All reports will be acknowledged.

Anyone seeing large flocks of Snow Buntings should report them to Wayne Ferguson, Snow Bunting Project Co-ordinator, 79-28 Livingston Road, Scarborough, Ontario, M1E 4S5.

REMEMBER THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 9 AT THE PLANETARIUM --- SO IF THAT IS THE DAY YOU WERE PLANNING TO VISIT GREAT-AUNT MATILDA, BRING HER ALONG TO THE MEETING TOO !!!!!

OBBA HOUSE FINCH PROJECT --- MORE BANDERS NEEDED -- Ricky Dunn

In the last newsletter, I asked if there was interest in colour-banding House Finches at feeders, to help us determine rates and distances of dispersal. There was good response, so the project has been set in motion. Sheila Smith will be receiving information on locations where we can band, and will be contacting banders to cover those spots. Reports of sightings will eventually come to me for compilation.

If you are willing to take part as a bander, or are even just considering it, please let me know. Write, Ricky Dunn, 30 Davidson Road, Aurora, Ontario, L4G 2B1 or phone 1-416-727-3519.

We need to get permission for you to use our colour-marking authorization. You must have a banding permit of your own, and will use your own bands, but we will provide you with colour bands and age/sex keys for House Finches. We plan to put on combinations denoting age, sex and year of banding .

House Finches have already settled into feeders, and may be difficult to age by late winter, so don't delay in joining our project.

PROJECT INFORMATION REQUESTS

The 1985 edition of the Directory of Co-operative Naturalists' Projects in Ontario will soon be compiled. The Directory is designed to publicize projects that rely on volunteer help and to attract wider participation in them. Selected project descriptions are published in Seasons, the magazine of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, in addition to their inclusion in the directory.

Examples of projects in the 1984 Directory include Christmas Bird Counts, inventories of natural areas, and county plant and bird checklists. Most projects to date have been bird studies, but a substantial number on other subjects have been included, and we are particularly interested in including more non-bird projects.

Naturalists interested in undertaking a project which may benefit from inclusion in the Directory are invited to write the compilers for a project description form, at the following address: Clive and Joy Goodwin, Directory of Co-operative Naturalists' Projects in Ontario, 45 Larose Ave., Apt. 103, Weston , Ontario M9P 1A8.

HELP!!!! ----HELP!!!!

This is my first attempt at putting together the OBBA newsletter. It is an interesting experience BUT, the cupboard is bare --- I do not have a single article remaining that I can put in another newsletter. I would really appreciate any little tid-bit you might have tucked away. Besides I have your phone number anyways --- I just may be calling you shortly --- beat me to the punch and prevent a mad editor from phoning at some early morning hour as he is heading out to his banding station on a Sunday.

