

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

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Please send articles to:
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

There are several items I'll mention in this note. First, two of our board members, Nigel Shaw and Wayne Ferguson, have resigned due to travel problems and a very heavy workload at school. We thank them for their contribution to OBBA and know that they will remain active with TBO and Snow Buntings particularly. In their places, the Executive invited Greg Sadowski of Thornhill and Bill McIlveen of Acton to complete the terms as Directors-at-large. Both very kindly consented and we welcome them to the Board.

You will read in this issue of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Sunday, February 22 in Burlington. John Miles and Martin McNicholl have arranged station reports and afternoon speakers, respectively, for that meeting. During the morning, a motion to raise membership dues, effective for 1987, will be discussed and voted on. Because of our increasingly precarious financial situation, the Board proposed at its November meeting to raise the fees from \$ 10.00 to \$ 15.00 for a regular membership; from \$ 12.00 to \$ 20.00 for a family membership; from \$ 5.00 to \$ 10.00 for a student membership. These increases should cover newsletter and journal costs for a few years, at least.

There are many other, more interesting parts of the AGM. Come out and enjoy them and have that once-a-year opportunity to see all your banding acquaintances again.

Our October meeting at the Kortright Centre, near Kleinberg, was not as well attended as we had hoped because of dull rainy weather. There were quite a few birds for banding demonstrations, including a Junco with considerable white edgings in the wing coverts. Thanks to David Lamble for organizing the banding and striving on in the face of small crowds.

(FROM THE PRESIDENT -- CONTINUED)

Bill Read had arranged an interesting hour-and-a-half of indoor presentations on Bluebirds and Hawks and found a receptive audience in the Kortright visitors. We were one of many attractions at the Centre that afternoon, but received plenty of attention and one or two new members. The bird guide draws were won by Tom Eastman of Toronto and Martin Wernaart of Campbellville.

REPORT FROM BANDING WORKSHOP, I.O.C. -- Bruce Duncan

In the August Newsletter (Vol 31 No. 3), I described the reports from around the world concerning bird-banding. That article outlined the plans, problems and accomplishments that made up the first half of the Banding Workshop. The second half was titled, "What to Band -- How Selective Should We Be? / Data Collection and Analysis / Applied Banding and Ringing". This part of the session began with Stuart Houston discussing maximizing recovery rates.

Stuart said that he selects species with high recovery rates, such as:

- Mourning Doves, Blue Jays and other Corvids
- Shrikes and Grackles
- Swallows
- colonial water birds
- raptors
- winter birds (because there is little decomposition of dead birds in the winter)

Stuart stated that he avoids summer banding of passerines since these produce a very low recovery rate.

Dan Tallman, of South Dakota, followed with a look at the value of back-yard banding. He had two major points. First, he emphasized the educational value of this type of banding. He gives banding demonstrations, provides material for college courses and obtains newspaper publicity for banding. Second, he wishes to develop the scientific value.

This scientific value concept was done, in Dan's case, by studying the ecology of bird populations in one location and comparing it to regional trends. The kind of data obtainable includes survival rate, population size being sampled, physiology, moult, fat level, weight, age structure of the population, early and late arrivals and departures, and distributional information.

Steve Wendt of the Canadian Banding Office, then spoke on banding in poorly covered areas. He defined the area not only geographically but also in species terms (e.g. only 20 Bobolinks were banded in Canada in 1982). The Banding Office can improve coverage through permit issuing or denial.

1. Issuing means more banders and, possibly, more training of people in remote areas. It also means more banding and hence, more baseline data. There are increases in public awareness of banding as more banders handle more birds. Last, with more banders, there are eventually more recoveries although the time involved may be very long.

(REPORT FROM BANDING WORKSHOP I.O.C. -- CONTINUED)

2. Denial of permit may be because of poor experimental design, particularly if the banding rate and the recovery rate are very low. There may be denial because of stress or risk to birds. Finally, since bands and staff cost money, the permit may be denied if better use can be made with another project.

Steve also mentioned that he would like to see more co-operative studies and less dependence on recoveries.

The next speaker, Martin McNicholl, described the double-banding project of the Long Point Bird Observatory. Address bands are placed on the second leg of birds banded with a standard FWS band. It is hoped that this will improve recovery rates, since few people seem to be aware of the address stamped on the inside of the standard band. Martin could not assess the success of the project since it was still in the early stages

A report on comparative moult studies undertaken during banding was made by R.J. Dowsett of South Africa. He noted that results showed that moult was fairly strictly timed in subtropical areas, even more so than nesting, but that there is geographical variation. Co-operating banders (about 20 -30) had used the British Trust for Ornithology moult cards and results had been computerized and reported on in Safring, the banding journal of South Africa.

Dowsett mentioned that three aspects warranted further attention:

1. "negative" records -- i.e. birds not in moult -- should be made, but a cost effective and efficient method for doing so was needed.
2. multiple retraps could provide the most valuable information and should be studied and reported carefully.
3. the breeding status of moulting birds should be noted.

Following the moult study report, Val Freer of the Eastern Bird Banding Association, talked about computer analysis of data, mentioning especially favourable programmes designed for accountants who also work with a great deal of data. For more detailed information on this session, readers should obtain, The Home Computer, VisiCalc and Bird Banding Data, by Valerie M. Freer, in North American Bird Bander 1986 11(2):53-54.

A talk by Przemslaw Brusse of Poland, on distribution of birds in different seasons using recovery data was next. He had examples of mapping by dots followed by mean directions of movement for different time periods and maps differentiating wintering areas and analyzed to show the proportion of birds arriving over different time periods. These analyses may show population differences within species.

The final presentation by Alan Singer of Minnesota, discussed bird banding and education at a Nature Centre. This report simply described the progress of banding from its first use to present-day, larger scale operations along with the involvement of 3rd and 4th graders.

The workshop was an intense pooling of information in a very brief time. Martin McNicholl is to be congratulated for putting it all together.

ARTISTIC TALENT IN OBBA

Kitt Chubb, a delightful young lady, who is deeply involved with the Avian Research Centre, has offered to add some art to our (sometimes???) dull pages. She has a sensitive touch for birds as I am sure you can see in this pencil sketch of Saw-whet Owl.



Saw-whet Owl

OBBA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DATE : Sunday, February 22, 1987

LOCATION: Royal Botanical Gardens Headquarters Building,
Lecture/ Seminar Room ,
680 Plains Road West,
Burlington, Ontario.

DIRECTIONS : 1. **FROM TORONTO**

Take the QEW west to Burlington. Exit at Plains Road and travel about 6 Km to Spring Garden Road (Holy Sepulchre Cemetery is on your left and Plains Road curves gently to the right at this corner). The RBG Headquarters are directly in front of you at this intersection. Parking is available behind the Headquarters.

2. **FROM NORTH OR WEST OF HAMILTON**

Take Highway 401 to Highway 6 South to Hamilton. Stay on Highway 6 , past the intersection of Highway 5, and down a long hill (a part of the Niagara Escarpment) until you come to set of traffic lights (about 2 Km past HWY 5). Turn left (i.e. East) and travel about 0.5 Km to another set of lights (Plains Road) and turn left here. The RBG Headquarters are about 1 Km along at Botanical Road. Parking lots can be reached off Botanical Road.

3. FROM THE SOUTH OR WEST OF HAMILTON

Take Highway 403 through Hamilton to Highway 6 NORTH. Only about 0.2 Km past the exit ramp there is a set of traffic lights. Turn right (i.e. East) at these lights; go about 0.5 Km to another set of lights (Plains Road) and turn left here. The RBG Headquarters are about 1 Km along the Botanical Road. Parking lots can be reached off Botanical Road.

SCHEDULE (tentative)

0915 - 0945	Registration
0945 - 0950	Welcome and Introductory Remarks
0950 - 1000	President's Report and Proposed Fee Increase -- Bruce Duncan
1000 - 1010	Treasurer's Report -- Fran Hubert
1010 - 1025	Editor's Report -- Bruce Duncan and David Lamble
1025 - 1035	Election of 1987 Executive
1035 - 1145	Station Reports -- Long Point Bird Observatory -- Hawk Cliff Raptor Banding Station -- Toronto Bird Observatory -- Guelph Banding Group -- Ottawa Banding Group
1145 - 1200	Report from the Banding Office
1200 - 1330	Lunch
1330 - 1430	"Ins and Outs of Kittiwakes and Noddys: Biology and Behaviour as Revealed by Banding" -- Dr. John Chardine
1430 - 1445	Coffee Break
1445 - 1500	Door Prizes ?????
1500 - 1515	"Food Abundance and Clutch Size of Tree Swallow " -- Dr. David J.T. Hussell and Terry E. Quinney
1515 - 1530	" Nest Box Project for the Eastern Screech Owl " -- Mike Furber
1530 - 1545	To be announced

THE IOC FIELD TRIP TO INNIS POINT -- Colin Griffiths

June 26th this year saw the success of a year's planning. Delegates to the International Ornithological Congress visited Innis Point Bird Observatory. The members of the Ottawa Banding Group were thrilled to entertain distinguished visitors from all over the world with breakfast and bird banding.

We had been concerned that our local birds would not co-operate and that the weather would be unpleasant. On both counts we could not have been more wrong. The weather had been pleasant all week, and gave us a light breeze on the day itself. Late June is too early for migrants and a bit early for many fledged young. But the birds co-operated in being caught in far greater numbers than we had expected. For an audience that included many unfamiliar with North American birds this made for a very interesting morning.

Among the visitors to our operation were Chandler Robbins and the secretary of Euring. During the course of the morning's banding, both gentlemen, with others, ably assisted to the mounting of mist nets around our Purple Martin houses. We were rewarded with one or two Martins for banding.

Breakfast was served throughout the morning. Somewhat chaotic, as the crowd of some 40 visitors shifted between touring the nest sites, standing around a busy banding station and chatting over breakfast. Perhaps the best part of the breakfast was the work of the chefs: Steve Wendt of CWS and George Jonkel of the U.S. Banding Office.

While the field trip was successful for our visitors, in showing them how we operate as well as a selection of our avifauna up close, it also taught us some things. Not least, was that handling a crowd of visitors at a site that normally supports a maximum of 10, requires a very different banding discipline. -- parts of the itinerary were dropped -- rendezvous were missed. But the birds we caught made up for these little failures. And we thought we could not count on them!!!!

We also owe our thanks to the James L. Baillie fund and the Ontario Bird Banding Association for their financial assistance in setting up the field trip to Innis Point.

CO-ORDINATION OF BANDERS' DATA -- W.D. McIlveen

I have had the opportunity to look over the field banding records of several groups and individuals over the past several years. With these opportunities, a few facts became apparent. In addition to the basic information which must be included on the banding schedule, many banders record routinely such measurements as wing chord, weights and other types of data. Often this data is collected for species which are not of prime interest to the bander's main project. Although there may be good intentions to actually examine this data at some time in the future, we must be realistic and admit this will never be done. Unless a mechanism is put into place to utilize this data, the effort made to collect it will be wasted. We, as banders, like to have the opportunity to handle birds and to observe them at close range. We should not forget that this privilege confers on us the responsibility for collecting scientific information.

With this in mind, I would like to suggest that the O.B.B.A. could function as a vehicle to ensure that maximum use is made of the available data. The intent of this suggestion is not to intrude into those areas where banders are currently working but to give them access to additional information.

There are 3 phases in achieving this end. They include:

1. Identifying the resource data available
2. bringing resource data to interested individuals, including collection of data to fill in gaps in our knowledge
3. preparing appropriate reports and summaries of data

To this end, I am willing to get the process started by determining the feelings of the membership to such an undertaking through the attached questionnaire. The results will be tabulated and summarized in a future newsletter.

QUESTIONNAIRE: AVAILABLE BANDING DATA

1. What is your main project? (please be brief)

2. Do you collect data on bird species beyond your main project?

Yes _____ No _____

3. Do you collect data in addition to that required by the Banding Office?

TYPE	ROUTINELY	REGULARLY	OCCASIONALLY	NEVER
WING CHORD				
WEIGHT				
SKULL OSSIFICATION				
BANDING TIME				
DESCRIPTIVE				
OTHER				

4. At what scale is your operation annually? (please check one)

- a) less than 100 birds _____ b) 100 to 1000 birds _____
c) 1000 to 5000 birds _____ d) 5000 to 10 000 birds _____
e) over 10 000 birds _____

5. Under what conditions would you make data available to other investigators for write up? (please check one)

- a) under no circumstance _____ b) under co-authorship _____
c) with right to publication review _____ d) no restrictions _____
e) other arrangement _____

6. Do you have a particular data set (or sets) which you would like to see examined and summarized? [if so , please list]

7. Would you like to have access to a data set for a particular species to help your project? [if so , please indicate]

SPECIES _____ DATA SET _____

8. Please provide comments on usefulness of this questionnaire and the objectives of the project.

9. Name and address (optional)

10. Send replies to Dr. W.D. McIlveen, R.R. 1, Acton, Ontario. L7J 2L7

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One of my students thought I might like his drawing of a Peregrine Falcon. So I am sharing it with you.



Andy Ramsey/85