



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

EDITOR'S NOTE

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Coming Events	1	
Dendroica—a tool for bird ID	2	You'll also find enclosed in this issue a membership renewal form.
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COMING EVENTS:

- **OBBA Annual General Meeting** . February 26 &27, 2011.
Location: Bird Studies Canada Headquarters, Port Rowan, ON.
- **Baillie Birdathon:** May 2010. Support the OBBA by sponsoring Bill Read, the OBBA's Birdathoner! For more information visit: www.bsc-eoc.org/support/birdathon, or contact Bill Read— info@billreadsbooks.com
- **North American Banding Council Annual Meeting.** September, 2011. Ashland, Oregon.
See www.nabanding.net for updates.

**HAVE A COMING EVENT OF NOTE TO THE ONTARIO BIRD BANDING COMMUNITY ?
LET THE EDITORIAL TEAM KNOW !!!**



DENDROICA: A NEW WEB-BASED TOOL FOR BIRD IDENTIFICATION

In May, the 2010 International Day for Migratory Birds was commemorated with launch of *Dendroica*, a new web-based bird identification tool developed to help volunteers and members of the general public to learn to identify birds by song or by sight. This website was produced by Environment Canada with support from partners at the United States Geological Survey and Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad of Mexico.

Dendroica is an interactive website developed to help students, volunteers and professionals improve their skills at identifying birds by sight or by sound, particularly so that they can participate in nature survey and monitoring programs. The site includes birds from throughout USA, Canada and Mexico, and allows participants to contribute new photographs and sound recordings, so it will continue to improve over time. Environment Canada and its partners support a large variety of bird monitoring programs, many of which rely on skilled volunteer participants to collect data.

The Government of Canada is responsible under the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, for ensuring that populations of migratory birds are maintained, protected and conserved. As Canada, the United States and Mexico share a great diversity and a great abundance of birds, the three countries are committed to unifying our efforts for landbird conservation by working together on collaborative actions and integrated programs.

More information about the NatureInstruct - *Dendroica* web-based tool is available at the following address:

www.natureinstruct.org/dendroica



VANIER--MCGILL BIRD-BANDING WORKSHOP 14-18 MAY 2010 Jude Girard

This spring I was invited to an ageing and sexing workshop given by Peter Pyle, jointly arranged by McGill Bird Observatory and Vanier College. There were 14 participants from Quebec and Ontario with widely ranging backgrounds, from extractors, just starting their banding careers, to 30-year veterans. We arrived at the Vanier College Field Station on Friday evening, excited to get started, and to meet Peter Pyle. Peter was very friendly and approachable, and impressed me throughout the weekend with his energy and passion for molt and ageing. Peter opened the workshop with a talk entitled 'Adventures in Molt' which not only gave us the theoretical background for the weekend, but introduced us to Peter's background as a young bander (starting at the age of four!), his sideline in shark research, and his persistent passion for molt, and puzzling out the age of birds.

On Saturday morning, we banded at the field station, and caught a variety of common birds (Black-capped Chickadee, American Goldfinch, Mourning Dove, Blue Jay), as well as a few migrants (Eastern White-crowned Sparrow, Ovenbird). Peter is much more familiar with the west coast species and races than the east coast birds, and it was fascinating to watch him working through the ageing process from first principles. Although most of the birds were familiar to most of the workshop participants, working through the ageing process with Peter was enlightening and a good reminder to pay attention to even the most common birds.

After lunch, we got back down to details, reviewing how birds are aged, and the various molt patterns, from simple-basic strategy to complex-alternate strategy. Lesley-Anne Howes also gave a presentation, reviewing permits, animal care and what's happening in the bird banding office. In the evening, Peter gave a talk on the MAPS program, presenting some of the recent progress and findings. Throughout the weekend, Peter stressed the importance of the MAPS program to bird research in North and South America, as well as the importance of aging birds correctly, so that more accurate data can be generated from the MAPS program.

Another common theme of the weekend was the need for banders to undertake studies of molt patterns and ageing of the birds they handle frequently, and for them to publish their findings. Much of the data in the Identification Guide to North American Birds comes from the study of museum specimens, and much more can be learnt by experienced banders handling and photographing live birds. As stressed, both in the Identification Guide to North American Birds, and by Peter himself, more study is needed!

On Sunday morning, we drove south in to Montreal to McGill Bird Observatory. MBO is located in Stoneycroft Wildlife Area, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec, adjacent to the Morgan Arboretum. Here we were able to see a greater variety of birds, including Wilson's Warbler, Northern Parula, Myrtle Warbler, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Peter and the MBO banders, spent a lot of time puzzling out the age and sex of the Baltimore Orioles which are caught quite commonly here. Again, it was fascinating to watch Peter puzzle through the birds, both in the hand and from photographs.



Peter Pyle and Simon Duval examine a Cedar Waxwing. Photo: Jude Girard

VANIER--MCGILL BIRD-BANDING WORKSHOP 14-18 MAY 2010 CON'T

Back at the field station in the afternoon, we practiced again and sexing both from Peter's photographs as well as from the specimen collection provided by the Bird Banding Lab. This was a great way to practice, and find out how much we had (or hadn't!) learnt over the weekend. We opened the nets at the field station again on Monday morning, but banding was slow, and we spent most of the morning inside. After more practice with photos and specimens, we discussed woodpeckers and owls in more detail, which was especially useful for the saw-whetters among us!

The weekend with Peter Pyle and the other workshop participants was fun, and invigorating, but most of all gave me a new appreciation for molt and the ageing process. If you ever get the chance to go to one of Peter's workshops, I highly recommend it!



Workshop participants: Back row L-R: David Oxley, Vanier College (VC) Alain Theriault, VC, Lance Laviolette, Brier Island Bird Migration Research Station, Marcel Gahbauer, McGill Bird Observatory (MBO), Gilles Burelle, Pointe-aux-Prairies Nature Park, Marie-France Julien, Regroupement QuébecOiseaux, Dominique Dufault, Cégep de Saint-Laurent, Jude Girard, Innis Point Bird Observatory, Quentin van Ginhoven, VC, Gay Gruner, MBO, Simon Duval, MBO, Marie-Anne Hudson MBO, Bottom row L-R: Lesley-Anne Howes, Bird Banding Office, Peter Pyle, Institute for Bird Populations, Brandee Diner, VC. Photo: Marcel Gahbauer

NORTH AMERICAN BANDING COUNCIL UPDATE David Okines

The North American Banding Council (NABC) held its annual meeting from the 5-7 March, 2010 at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson, Arizona. 18 Council members and 3 NABC Trainers attended this 3 day meeting. Audrey Heagy and David Okines who represented the OBBA and Lesley Howes of the BBO were the Canadian representatives.

Training and Workshop Committee.

John Alexander will prepare a report on several workshops that were held, focusing on NABC materials.

Certification

- a) Anthony Hill was elected as the chair of the Certification Committee, all requests to hold an NABC Certification session will go to him (anhinga13@hotmail.com)
- b) The Committee agreed that the current pool of test questions be evaluated to assure they are in line with the new evaluation materials or existing NABC Manuals.
- c) Discussion was had regarding the need to stay in touch with the supporting organizations as well as all certified Banders.
- d) There was a motion passed that NABC Certification will no longer expire, contingent on the certified individuals maintaining updated contact information with the NABC. The Recertification Committee is to review and potentially contact those individuals who are beyond the five year period of certification to determine if they would like to maintain certification.
- e) A simplified evaluation process, which is based on the current Trainer's Checklist replaces the current field evaluation process during evaluation sessions.
- f) The current NABC manuals will be reviewed and revised.

An alternative evaluation process:

During the meeting, the NABC Evaluation Committee and Council voted to approve a new method for certifying as Trainers, those bird banders who have exceptional experience who are unable to attend a session. This process will consist of an application containing the following:

- Proof of having scored at least 90% on the NABC written exam.
- Cover letter clearly summarizing the applicant's qualifications as a trainer. This letter should address the following:
 - Years of experience training banders (≥ 5 years) and
 - Approximate number of banders trained (≥ 10 individuals).
 - Examples of banders trained and describe the training provided.
 - Identify which of your trainees have been certified by NABC and what level?



NORTH AMERICAN BANDING COUNCIL UPDATE CON'T.

- Three letters of recommendation from certified NABC Trainers (two of whom have banded extensively with the individual and have been involved in past Evaluation Sessions) summarizing the following:
 - Their personal knowledge of the applicant's recent banding experience
 - Their personal knowledge of the applicant's recent bander training abilities
 - Their personal knowledge of the applicant's ethical standards in regards to bird banding
- Curriculum Vitae showing 3 banding-related peer-reviewed publications
- Signed letter (1) indicating that the NABC study guide and training manuals (and relevant bird group manuals) have been read in full and (2) stating the applicant's commitment to teach using the principles and techniques therein.

Certification process: The certification committee will review each of these applications and a quorum (percent to be determined) of that committee will make the final determination.

Evaluation Committee.

Committee continues work on evaluation papers and an international evaluation protocol.

Outreach Committee.

Committee will work on developing a plan to reach different audiences, engage Trainers and Banders in the work of NABC, produce a general white paper for all to use in informing their organization or the public to ensure that all audiences receive the same message, and write a short summary of the NABC Annual Meeting for publication in the OSNA Newsletter.

Bylaws.

Following discussion Council agreed to identify ten organizations as member organizations in the bylaws, allow up to 25 directors, and include three At Large seats for Trainer representatives to be elected by active Trainers for three year terms. Motion: To accept the bylaws revision pending legal review.

Bird Banding Laboratory.

The current budget and staffing remain at last year's level; a two-year band supply is being maintained. Encounters are increasingly reported and handed via the web, saving high costs on the 1-800 number use. A new version of Bandit, 3.0, is in Beta version now, will be completed in 3-6 months. The original version will shortly be abandoned. So any current users should update. Stimulus money is allowing conversion of 6.5 million paper and microfilm encounter records to digital. The pending newly developed BBL regulations are currently being reviewed, and may be published for public comment by the end of the year.

LaMNA.

The purpose of the Landbird Monitoring Network of the Americas is to preserve banding data, and to bring together people who monitor birds, from the smallest bird banding and censusing stations to large bird observatories and government agencies. There are now 790 banding stations reporting to LaMNA with one million banding records in hand or promised. OBBA members should consider contributing to LaMNA !

For more information visit www.klamathbird.org/lamna/index.htm .



NORTH AMERICAN BANDING COUNCIL UPDATE CON'T.

New Business

- a.) Items of policy and procedure, including new Trainer representative elections, will be covered in a Procedural manual, with the initial draft to be prepared by Mark Shieldcastle.
- b.) Bob Frey was appointed to chair an Ad Hoc Recognition committee to develop the award concept and criteria to establish three awards, to a Trainer, a Council member, and an outgoing Council member.
- c.) The Chair of NABC will contact the Executive Director of the Ornithological Council and Greg Smith indicating that NABC has a number of concerns regarding the requirement of GPS points on banding reports. To view the full minutes of meeting and to learn more about NABC visit the website

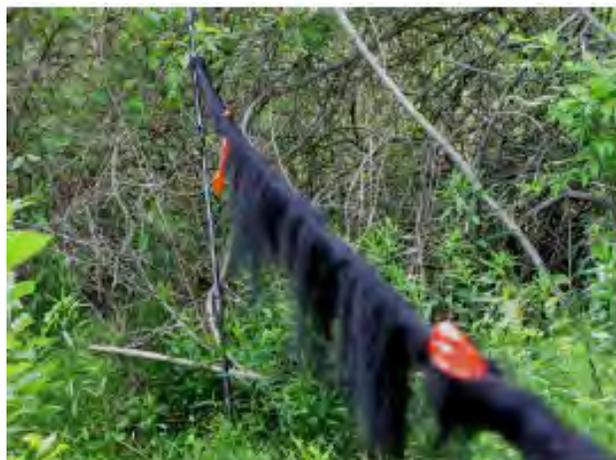
—www.nabanding.net—

SUGGESTIONS ON MIST NET FURLING. Jim Smith

For those of us lucky enough to be able to keep our nets up through long periods of time, the art of furling nets is a required skill. The object of course is to have the nets so that they will not catch anything when we are not in attendance.

I was taught to do what I will refer to as the “crank method”. You stand at one end and spin the net around until it is reasonably furlled and tie 3 to 5 ties to keep it from blowing open. The problem with this method is that it is difficult to open unless you figure out which direction the net was cranked.

I moved on to holding the top panel up and then furling the net into the top panel and again putting 3 to 5 ties in



The Crank Method.



The top panel up, ready to furl..

to keep the net closed. Not too difficult to open after undoing all the ties and finding a place to put them. The place was everything from just dropping them to putting them under an end tether.

The method I propose does away with all but a central tether which is attached to a handy bush or pinned to the ground at the center of the net. It is left permanently in that position so that when you are finished furling the net you pick it up and tie the net. This gives you one tether to undo in the morning. This method or a similar variation was shown by David Okines and a British bander who was with me showed me the hand method which eliminates friction from ropes as shown by David.

SUGGESTIONS ON MIST NET FURLING CON'T.

- Keep the top panel up and furl net into the top panel.
- Go to the middle of the net and make a circle with your thumb and first finger and put the net into this circle with both hands.
- Push with one hand and allow the net to twirl in the circle then push with the other back and forth all the time allowing the net to twirl inside the circle. It is easily learned after a few tries.
- The net should after a minute be tight and about the diameter of a thick pencil.
- Tie the center cord so it can be opened with just one pull.
- Push down the end top panels and the net should roll itself at the end.
- Tuck any end pieces still hanging.

This method allows the nets to be easily opened. You pull the center cord and the net will actually whirl as it opens up. Push your end tethers into position and give the net a shake and you are done.



RUTHVEN PARK BIRDING FESTIVAL MARYLIN HAVELAK, CAO, Ruthven Park

The first birding Festival met our expectations and more. So much so that we will do it next year. The weather cooperated and so did the birds! The *Arrogant Worms* set the stage with a lively concert on Friday evening. The banding station was opened by about 6 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday morning. At certain times it was so packed we could have had an alternate station for birders outside. Morning bird census walks were led by volunteer Peter Thoen and bander Rick Ludkin. Trail and nature walks were led by members of Grand Valley Trails and Mike Furber. Throughout the day visitors could all end a presentation by experts in birding, visit the exhibitors' tent or join the kids in the tent with activities and demonstrations. Approximately 450 attended the Festival. We were very pleased to have Windsor University and Trent University students represented. They stayed for the weekend and assisted in the banding lab under head bander Rick Ludkin. They were enthusiastic and it is encouraging to have young people involved with Ruthven and our conservation work.

Here's what some people said about the Festival:

"My parents came down on Saturday and it was really great for them to be able to meet the people I work with and talk about regularly. It was particularly great for them to see Ollie's (Dr. Oliver Love, University of Windsor) presentation. While I may have told them many times about what I do, it had a huge impact for them to hear it from him as well as see how many other people were there and interested in hearing it too. So that was an extra personal benefit for me, made possible because of the Festival."

"I think everyone should be excited about the diversity of participants and the large turnout. Congratulations on having such a successful first event."

"We at the Owl Foundation appreciated the opportunity to attend your first annual Festival, both to display our booth and to present our work in the speakers session. It is a privilege to make our work (rehabilitation for injured and orphaned owls) better known amongst birders and the public, by presentations at locations such as Ruthven."

We would like to thank the volunteers, speakers, exhibitors for helping to make the festival a very positive experience. The support of the Celebrate Ontario, Ministry of Tourism and Culture and The Ontario Trillium Foundation made the Festival possible.

Excerpt with permission from: Riversong, Newsletter of the Lower Grand River Land Trust Inc.

HANDY WEB-LINKS:

Alpha code database: www.birdpop.org/AlphaCodes.htm

Canadian Migration Monitoring Network: www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/cmmn/index.jsp

Guide to molt in North American birds: www.birdpop.org/danflyer.htm

Identification tool kit: www.natureinstruct.org

Landbird Monitoring Network of the Americas: www.klamathbird.org/lamna/index.htm

Ontario Bird Banding Association: www.ontariobanding.org

North American Banding Council: www.nabanding.net





SPRING 2010 PHOTO QUIZ

White-rumped Sandpiper.
October, 2009. The Tip of Long Point.
Juvenile. , Sex = unknown.

A *Calidris* sandpiper, relatively long slightly curved bill—with reddish base to the lower mandible, dark auriculars with rufous tinge, and a WHITE RUMP! The uniform plumage with brown fringing on the secondaries in particular are characteristic of young birds in fall.



FALL 2010 PHOTO QUIZ

Use the Identification Guide to North American Birds Volume I or other resources to figure out the species, age and sex of this individual.

Answer will be posted in the next OBBA newsletter. For members receiving this newsletter by mail, colour photos are available on the OBBA web-site.

October, 2008.
Tip of Long Point.

VISIT US ON THE WEB! - WWW.ONTBANDING.ORG -

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION (2010-2011)

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**The OBBA newsletter is published three times a year, in winter, spring and fall.
Deadlines for receiving material for publication are December 15, April 15 and August 15.
For more information contact Stu Mackenzie. s_a_mackenzie@yahoo.ca**

The Ontario Bird Banding Association is a non-profit, membership-driven and inclusive organization representing the interests of all amateur and 'professional' bird banders across Ontario.
If you band birds in Ontario, for any reason, you should be a member!





Ontario Bird Banding Association

Charitable Registration No. 87319 5960 RR0001

www.ontbanding.org

2011 Membership Application or Renewal

Membership fees are due in January

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ Prov: _____

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Phone: () _____ - _____

Email: _____

Mailing Preferences: get full colour photos, go green, and save the OBBA postage costs by opting to get your newsletters and journal emailed to you.

- Please send me the Newsletter and Journal as an email attachment.
- Please send me the Newsletter and Journal by regular mail
- Please send me the Newsletter by email and mail me the Journal

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- Student (\$10)**
- Outside of Canada and United States \$10 mailing surcharge**

Additional Donation: \$ _____, tax receipt issued if \$10 or more.

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