



Partners in Flight
Monitoring & Inventory
Working Group



Klamath Bird
Observatory



U.S. Forest Service
Redwood Sciences Laboratory



Bureau of Land
Management



Cornell Laboratory of
Ornithology eBird

Newsletter of
**LANDBIRD MIGRATION MONITORING NETWORK
OF THE AMERICAS**

<http://www.klamathbird.org/lammna/>

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LaMMNA Banding Data Coordinator Hired

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Leo Salas has accepted the position of Banding Data Coordinator. Among his many exciting tasks, Leo will be helping to bring LaMMNA datasets together in the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN) and make them available to our cooperators through the AKN and a set of interactive analysis tools. Leo's position is funded through a National Science Foundation grant to the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell, through PRBO Conservation Science. He will be stationed in Arcata, California, working closely with the Redwood Sciences Laboratory's bird monitoring group.



Leo and daughter.

Leo's recent background is as a Conservation Biologist, most recently in New Guinea, where he worked with the World Wildlife Fund, Wildlife Conservation Society, and The Nature Conservancy among others. His primary research background over the years has been on the ecology of endangered and hunted wildlife: lowland tapirs, montane cuscuses, bornean orangutans, and spectacled bears. He also has substantial experience in capturing and banding birds, including research on the annual cycles of five species in Venezuela for his undergraduate thesis.

Leo is originally from Venezuela, where he received his B.S. in Biology from Universidad Simón Bolívar in Caracas. He went on to get his M.S. in Wildlife Conservation and Ph.D. in Organismic and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Massachusetts. In the course of his work he has also gained a great deal of experience in computer databases and programming. He has spent considerable time writing and troubleshooting programs and creating databases, both for his own projects and for others.

We are excited over the possibilities of this new phase in our project. As his job title indicates, Leo will be coordinating the collection and archiving LaMMNA's banding data with the AKN. Some of his duties will include: actively soliciting data for archiving in the AKN database from banding station operators; developing new methods for tracking cooperators and their databases; and facilitating networking of banding stations. He will also be developing on-line visualization tools for banders and researchers to explore and analyze their data. He will

collaborate with our partners for new strategies on both national and international levels to implement the AKN for data preservation, research, education, and conservation purposes. His contact information is lsalas@prbo.org and telephone is 707-825-2940.

AKN Banding Data Schema Update

The AKN database structure (known as a “schema”) is now in place to receive census data from our member organizations. We are working closely with Cornell’s AKN on a schema for storing the variables unique to banding data and integrating it into the census-based data that already reside in their database. By bringing together all banding data contributed to LaMMNA in a common schema, these data will be at your fingertips, literally. A team of ornithologists and database specialists have been working diligently and are getting closer to the final result. For more information on the current database structure for census data and related visualization tools, please visit the AKN website at <http://www.avianknowledge.net/>.

LaMMNA Node and Banding Data Schema Update

Many of you might now be wondering – hasn’t this been reported on already? How is this different than the AKN banding data schema you just reported on in the article above? The difference is that the AKN manages the database that integrates data from multiple sources, of which LaMMNA is just one source. We will have the Networks’ data up on our own data server, or Node, which will then be harvested by the AKN using the program DiGIR (Distributed Generic Information Retrieval). This system is already in place at other Nodes to retrieve census-based data.

There are several steps to get a Node up and running. The first steps, creating and testing a schema with data, has been completed for banding data and we have uploaded a few years of data from several of our members. The next steps involve getting the server in place and loaded with the database and related programs for managing and harvesting the data. We can then test that the AKN can harvest data from it. This server is now in place and we are uploading programs and data. We will be using a census database to test the interface between the AKN and our Node since the AKN banding schema is not yet in place (see above). Once we have passed this test, we will be ready for the final step where AKN harvests LaMMNA banding data, which will happen as soon as their database is fully functional.

Avian Influenza Research Update

During 2006, LaMMNA and MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survival) stations combined captured more than 350,000 birds in 40 states, sampling more than 9,000 birds of about 250 species for avian influenza. Of those, LaMMNA completed about 2,600 cloacal samples, and took 1,100 feather samples from 145 species. We had 45 cooperators sampling in 32 states. In addition, several LaMMNA stations were able to sample through the winter with their remaining supplies.

The spring migration season is currently under way at LaMMNA stations, and we were able to get some sampling kits out. We had hoped to be able to get kits to all who were interested, but funding was stretched tight this year. We hope to get more kits out for the fall season.

The sampling protocol changed slightly this spring. We are now using guanidine, instead of ethanol, for storing cloacal samples. There are many advantages to using a guanidine solution, as it preserves much longer fragment lengths (500-900 bp) for DNA analyses, has

longer preservation times, and guanidine is less likely to evaporate in field conditions. This year we are also supplying the small, 1-mm swabs for sampling.

Bird Banding in the Americas Workshop

The Bird Banding in the Americas Workshop was held at La Mancha, Veracruz, México in October 2006 during the IV North American Ornithological Conference. The meeting was attended by 55 individuals from 11 countries. During the meeting, participants made a commitment to establish a voluntary banding network called the Western Hemisphere Bird Banding Network (WHBBN).

Establishing the WHBBN is an initial step toward a concerted effort on bird marking and related research in the Americas in a way that would contribute more effectively to worldwide avian research and monitoring efforts, especially in light of international issues such as climate change global warming and avian influenza. Also, the increase of banding activities in many American countries has highlighted a need to coordinate efforts for research into the biology, ecology, monitoring, and conservation needs of migrant and resident bird species at larger spatial and temporal scales throughout the continent. The WHBBN would facilitate data management and develop mechanisms for coordinating band distribution, numbering, and reporting within the Americas.

Participants defined several goals for the network:

- Ensure that Latin American and Caribbean organizations and countries have easier access to bands, with interregional coordination of bands and markers for migrants and non-migrants. This includes defining band sizes, creating individual country codes, and establishing a single web address for tracking bands and band recoveries.
- Facilitate the banding permit process between and within countries, including the establishment of a list of departmental contacts and detailed requirements for permit issuance for each country.
- Create a system for securely storing, managing, and sharing banding and encounter data for the Americas.
- Create regional, standardized training programs to develop highly skilled and motivated banders who will then be able to assist the permitting officers in assessing the qualifications of banders.

The next workshop is on July 24 after the 16th Regional Meeting of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB, <http://www.scscb.org/>), which will be held on July 19-23 in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. For further information on the Western Hemisphere Bird Banding Network, please contact Maria Isabel Moreno (mmoreno@proaves.org), Steering Committee Chair or Lesley-Anne Howes (Lesley-Anne.Howes@ec.gc.ca), Steering Committee Secretary.

Interested in membership or learning more about LaMMNA? See our web page at <http://www.klamathbird.org/lammna/> for details and a membership application form.