Newsletter of the

LANDBIRD MONITORING NETWORK OF THE AMERICAS

http://www.klamathbird.org/lamna/

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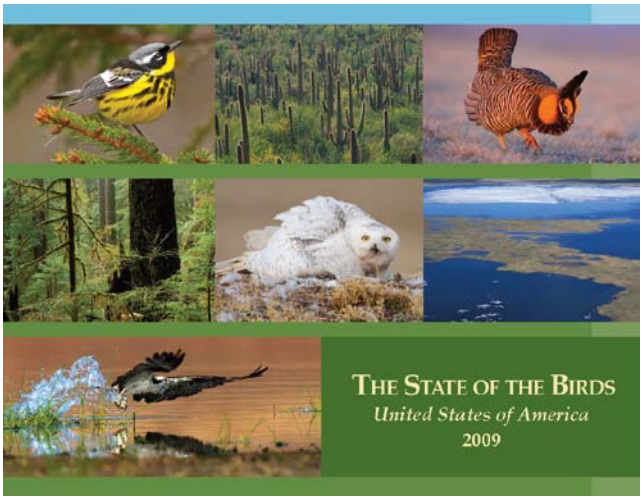
The State of the Birds, 2009



The State of the Birds, 2009, was released this past spring by the Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar. This document presents birds and indices that describe bird population trends as bellwethers of the natural and cultural health as the US and its neighbors. This report presents a new, forward looking index of the integrity of the environments that provide us with the natural resources on which our economic development depends, not to mention our clean air and water, fertile soils, and abundant wildlife. A group of federal and state government wildlife experts and leading conservation organizations responsible for this unprecedented effort to demonstrate the link between healthy bird populations and the well being of the United Sates and our global neighbors included the American Bird Conservancy, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Klamath Bird Observatory, National Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, North American Bird Conservation Initiative, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey to create *State of the Birds, 2009*.

This comprehensive report documents an important and troubling message about the state of our environment. Fortunately, the report also finds cause for optimism if we take conservation action now. Each year, thousands of citizen and professional scientists from across the Americas contribute data to important surveys efforts. However, little is known about the population trends of birds in many habitats, and the demographic mechanisms the drive population change, hampering our ability to help. Greater and more coordinated monitoring efforts are needed to ensure that we can identify why birds need help--while we still have time to make a difference.

Members of LaMNA are very aware of the sobering realities of bird population declines and the optimism that our science provides. While we recognize and have tracked population declines, the demographic data we collect using mist netting and banding techniques, and share through LaMNA and the Institute for Bird Populations, can now be used by Avian Knowledge Network cooperators to identify causes of population declines, helping to focus conservation.

The report is available at http://www.stateofthebirds.org/.

-**John D. Alexander, Klamath Bird Observatory (jda@KlamathBird.org)**

LaMNA Data Services - Calling All Data!

We are pleased to announce that we have begun integrating banding data from several LaMNA members into the Bird Monitoring Data Exchange (BMDE). This is an exciting new step toward our goal of having data accessible and archived on the internet. We currently have 300,000 banding records appended to the database with another 500,000

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records already in progress or waiting in the wings to be processed.

We are ready to accept new banding data. The process is outlined on our web page in a slide show at http://www.klamathbird.org/lamna/dataarchiving.htm. If you are interested in submitting your data, please contact us for further details.

Additionally, we have been working hard to create data tools for banders. Most recently, we worked with Pablo Elizondo and Aves de Costa Rica to develop a tool to track bands that they issue to permittees, including a band inventory, bands that are returned, permits, and contacts. This tool was completed and is now being put to use in Costa Rica. More information on this tool is in the following article.

We have also created a banding data entry tool that can be used in the field with a laptop computer as data is collected. We hope to have a beta version on the web page soon. More information on these and other tools can be seen on the LaMNA web page at http://www.klamathbird.org/lamna/data_tools.htm.

- Linda Long, U. S. Forest Service, Redwood Sciences Laboratory (lllong@fs.fed.us)

LaMNA Provides Band Tracking Tool for Costa Rica

Thanks to the great effort between LaMNA and other cooperators, we are pleased to announce that the Red de Anilladores de Aves Costa Rica has a band tracking tool. This database has the capabilities of efficiently managing bands for resident birds provided by Porzana and of generating reports, which makes managing and issuing bands to the different projects within the country an easy task. This tool also aids in tracking permits, banders, contact information, returns, and much more.

The band tracking tool is now up and running and has been fully implemented on the servers of the National Institute of Biodiversity (INBio), allowing for weekly back-ups and proper management of the tool, as well as the preservation and safety of the band data.

This new implementation will have a big impact on banding operations in Costa Rica, allowing greater control over tracking bands. It will also facilitate promotion of safe and efficient banding, relying on the management of bands through this proficient database and allowing us more time to be in touch with the projects.

The banding scheme of Costa Rica has issued bands to different projects within the country. The U.S. Forest Service International Programs and the Connecticut Audubon Society in partnership with the Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad (INBio) and the Klamath Bird Observatory, provide office space and salary for a full-time banding coordinator in Costa Rica. Porzana Ltd. has provided free bands to be used on resident birds with the inscription AvesCR.org.

This tool can be easily customized by banding schemes in other countries and will be available upon request from LaMNA.

-Pablo Elizondo, Aves de Costa Rica (jpelizondo@zeledonia.org)

Museum Cases for your Banding Station's Specimens

We have some exciting news. The NABC has obtained a source of free standard museum specimen cabinets that are being stored for the moment in the Washington DC area. These are about one cubic yard (40" deep, 29" wide, and 40" high), with about 10-15 specimen trays. They would be available to NABC stations for shipping costs. For more information about becoming an official NABC station, contact C. J. Ralph at cjr2@humboldt.edu or 707-825-2992.

Through the efforts of the North American Banding Council (NABC), a nationwide permit has been obtained from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to allow banding stations to have readily available bird specimens for training and data quality. Many birds come to stations, salvaged from various sources, including the occasional sad mortality from our conscientious efforts.

If you would like the details of the permit, and an application form to become a NABC station, please check with us. Some states will require an additional permit, but many consider the federal banding permit sufficient.

- C. J. Ralph, U. S. Forest Service, Redwood Sciences Laboratory (cjr2@humboldt.edu)

Avian Influenza and Migratory Connectivity

University of California-Los Angeles's Center for Tropical Research (UCLA), Institute for Bird Populations (IBP), and LaMNA came together in 2006 for a 4-year project to research avian influenza viruses in landbird populations (http://www.ioe.ucla.edu/ctr/research/AvPath/avian_influenza_main.html). This research aims to identify both avian influenza virus strains and migratory corridors which could spread the viruses. Participants have been collecting cloacal swabs to test for the virus and tail feathers for DNA analysis for migratory connectivity.

It is hard to believe, but the data collection phase of the project for the virus is now wrapping up, with some LaMNA members continuing to collect samples this fall with supplies left over from earlier seasons. UCLA has submitted a grant proposal to continue swab samples for another year with a smaller set of stations, but so far there has been no news on that funding or what stations would participate.

Over the past four years, LaMNA members have collected 14,000 cloacal swabs and 11,000 tail feathers at 100 stations at last count, with many samples still to come in from this year's collection. They collected samples year round, with the highest numbers of swabs collected during the fall and spring seasons, averaging 2,600 and 1,300 swabs per year, respectively. This is in addition to samples collected by the many stations that participated under IBP, so UCLA now has thousands of samples to process. We will keep you updated on results as it comes available.

UCLA has been conducting research into migratory connectivity for many years (http://www.ioe.ucla.edu/ctr/research/neotropical-migrants.html). They are very interested in the continued participation of LaMNA stations in this project. Stations who are interested in participating can contact LaMNA for further details.

- Linda Long, U. S. Forest Service, Redwood Sciences Laboratory (lllong@fs.fed.us)

Upcoming Meetings

The Inland Bird Banding Association, Annual Meeting, 6-8 November 2009, St. Louis, Missouri. http://IBBAinfo.org

American Ornithologists' Union, Cooper Ornithological Society and Society of Canadian Ornithologists, Joint Annual Meeting, 7-11 February 2010, San Diego, California. http://www.birdmeetings.org/cosaousco2010/

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