

WBBA helps host banding webinars.

WBBA, the Institute for Bird Populations, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are hosting a series of (approximately) monthly webinars on topics related to the conservation of birds and bird banding. Presenters from across the hemisphere have recently presented on topics such as: translating MAPS ageing codes to WRP; long-term bird banding and monitoring in the Maya Mountains of Belize; Art + Science = Scientific Illustration; An Introduction to Autonomous Recoding Units and Artificial Intelligence; Adventures in Bird Molt -- Finding fun in a forbidding yet fundamental process (Peter Pyle); the Bird Genoscape Project; and others. All of the webinars are recorded and can be found at <https://birdpop.org/pages/videoRecordings.php>. -- Steve

Next May at Bear Divide!

Next year's Annual Meeting will feature the amazing spectacle of thousands of passerines streaming at eye level (or lower) over the mountain pass (and even right through observers' legs) at Bear Divide in the mountains above Los Angeles. Save the dates, ***Saturday, May 6th through Tuesday, May 9th 2023!*** Come and enjoy interesting talks, field trips, workshops, food, and camaraderie with other banders, near and far. Check out our webpage for more information. The local committee chair will be Tania Romero (t4lromero@gmail.co) .

Is the Term "Bird Banding" Obsolete? And What Should We Do About It?

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Key Words: Bird Banding, Geolocators, Movement Ecology

When the Eastern, Inland, and Western Bird Banding Associations were formed in 1925, bird banding was one of the only tools available to document the movement ecology of birds through recaptures or recoveries. Banding remains an integral tool for studying many aspects of avian ecology. Its utility has grown exponentially along with the sciences of population modeling, molt, and demographics. Today avian ecologists use a plentitude of tools and methodologies to understand the seasonal and annual movements of birds. Light-level geolocators, GPS trackers, the Motus network, the Icarus project, the analysis of stable isotopes, the delineation of population-specific genotypes, and radar tracking can pinpoint the movements of birds and bird populations from regional to meter-scale precision.

While many of these devices obviate the need for recapture of a bird, greatly increasing sample sizes and analytical capability, one downside of these new tools is cost or the need for expensive, highly technical equipment and/or laboratory space. In short, these tools will not make bird banding obsolete. In most cases, the new technologies and banding are complementary, and the micro-aging, morphometric, and physical condition data derived from "banding" provide essential data for understanding important aspects of avian ecology that are not obtainable by other methods. In addition, bird banding provides enormous opportunities for environmental education and outreach. Most banders we know have or know of stories of people whose lives were profoundly changed by closely observing or handling their first live bird.