

**Research Coordination Committee on Bird Marking Workshop**

August 18, 2014; 9:30 – 17:00

Tokyo, Japan.

**Meeting Chair:** Charles Francis (Canada)

**In attendance:** Shuihua Chen (China), Zhong-yong Fan (China), Yiwei Lu (China), Xingfeng Si (China), Andrea Kölzsch (Germany), Jessica Schnell (Germany), Vivian Fu (Hong Kong), Yat-tung Yu (Hong Kong), S. Balachandra (India), Aisha Sultana (India), H.S.A. Yahya (India), Aida Fithri (Indonesia), Dewi Prawirabilaga (Indonesia), Pramana Yuda (Indonesia), Haruko Ando (Japan), Simba Chen (Japan), Tomohiro Deguchi (Japan), Takashi Hiraoka (Japan), Hajime Kimura (Japan), Sayaka Kobayashi (Japan), Shigemoto Komeda (Japan), Yuka Kosono (Japan), Haruo Kuroda (Japan), Fumio Mizoguchi (Japan), Takuya Nakajima (Japan), Noboru Nakamura (Japan), Haruki Natsukawa (Japan), Kiyooki Ozaki (Japan), Yusuke Sawa (Japan), Mariko Senda (Japan), Yoshimitsu Shigete (Japan), Hisashi Sugawa (Japan), Masaoki Takagi (Japan), Keiko Yoshiyasu (Japan), Pavel Keitorov (Russia), Maria Vladimirtseva (Russia/Yakutia), spike Millington (South Korea), Judit Szabo (South Korea), Scott Lin (Taiwan), Lucia Severinghaus (Taiwan) and Sheldon Severinghaus (USA).

The Research Coordination Committee on Bird Marking hosted a one day workshop to discuss current issues related to marking birds and the management of banding/ringing schemes and associated data. Forty-two (42) representatives of ringing/banding schemes and others interested in bird marking issues from 11 countries participated. The workshop provided a forum to promote coordination, cooperation and networking, among marking schemes and networks, facilitate communication of ideas, approaches and best practices among schemes, promote use of new technologies and approaches for project design, field data collection, data management and analysis; and promote international standards for bird marking.

**1. Bird marking programs reports:**

- a) **Japan** (Dr. Ozaki and Yusuke Sawa): An atlas of banding data had been published for 1961-1995. Banding data on the website is kept up to date and has a mapping feature which maps recoveries. Data are within a 1km radius. Japan has promoted many banding workshops in SE Asia and is interested in establishing an international treaty on bird conservation throughout the flyway but require more government interest. There is a proposal for a Eur-Asia/Pacific ring. Several collaborative projects underway in Japan include studying abnormal tail feathers in Reed Buntings, a MAPS program (2012) to determine possible impacts of the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident, long term seabird monitoring and several projects using geolocators to better understand information on birds moving from Japan to SE Asian countries where formerly there were no recoveries.
- b) **India** (Dr. Bala): India uses traditional banding to mark birds but more recently has used coordinated colour-marking including neck collars and leg tags. Satellite tracking is used on a few species mostly waterfowl and flamingo and a geocator study is being planned for next year. Avian influenza surveillance training is taking place in conjunction with banding. There are 4 banders 6 trainees in India. Passerine ringing has been greatly reduced since 2002 and is mostly just used for training now. There is currently increased emphasis on data analysis of the past 4 decades of data (e.g., age ratio changes). India is preparing a ringing recovery atlas with data for at least 70 species and ringing recovery maps to be released at CBD meeting in October.

- c) **Hong Kong**: The Hong Kong program has been most active since 1980 where they ring approximately 3000-4000 birds/year. Much banding activity takes place at the Mai Po Nature Reserve. They have been using colour bands since 2001 and colour flags since 2010. This has resulted in many more resighting records both locally and overseas (including recently one from Marshall Islands in Pacific). There is little banding of resident species, as these are not a priority for the current banders.
- d) **Indonesia** (Dewi M. Prawiradilaga): Banding in Indonesia began in 1961. Then a gap until 1991 when using Yamashina bands were used until approximately 2005. They are working in various areas to set up "long-term" banding programs. In 2006 the Indonesian bird-banding scheme (IBBS) with bands began. There is no formal training program rather; it is a small program with local training in various areas.
- e) **South Africa** (Dieter Oschadleus by email): SAFRING is doing well. 1.5 years ago SAFRING started an online ringing data submission system which contains many automatic checks before any data is uploaded. This approach reduces the administrative work-load, although there are still lots of post-upload checks and queries to deal with.

2. **Updates on recent developments in other regions:**

- a. **Australasia** (Judith Szabo): The East Asian-Australasian Flyway extends from the Arctic Circle, East and South-east Asia, to Australia and New Zealand, and incorporates 22 countries. The EAAF Partnership includes governments, international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and inter-governmental organisations and only deals with waterbirds. There are several task forces including one on coordination of colour-marking.
  - b. **Americas** (Charles Francis): Western Hemisphere Bird Banding Network (WHBBN) is a voluntary network of individuals and organisations that use bird banding and marking for ornithological research and monitoring. The network aims to increase coordination throughout the Western Hemisphere in all aspects of bird marking. A recent achievement is the development of the Pan American Shorebird Program Marking Protocol (PASP) for shorebirds in the Western Hemisphere.
  - c. **Africa** (Dieter Oschadleus email update): AFRING is quieter due to lack of funds, and there have been no AFRING courses for some time. We are keen to continue with the AFRING concept. SAFRING rings are being used outside of southern Africa, particularly by Jos University in Nigeria. Ringing in East Africa is continuing with local Kenyans, using "Nairobi" rings, but we are collaborating to archive all their ringing data in our database. This will provide a backup for the data, and we can offer web services to make summaries of their ringing data public.
3. **International coordination of auxiliary markers** (Charles Francis): Coordination of auxiliary marker is essential to ensure no overlap in markers to ensure the identity of the individual bird can be determined. Coordination promotes high data quality and confidence in the resighting data and thereby adds scientific integrity of results, credibility to project and confidence

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associated conservation activities. There are number of collaborative systems to assist in coordination; however, there is room for improvement and improved methods of coordination.

- Discussed efforts to coordinate markers for waders in North America (PASP) as well as some of the challenges with coordination in Asia.

4. **Marking birds with new technologies** (Jessica Schnell and Andrea Kölzsch): Movebank is a free, online database of animal tracking data that allows researchers to manage, share, protect, analyze, and archive their tracking data from multiple new technology types including radio-tags, satellite tags, and data loggers. Researchers maintain data ownership and set the level of data sharing and release. Movebank has an integrated R-package for movement analysis and can do automated live update from certain types of data sources (eg satellite trackers). It includes sophisticated analysis packages, including integration with environmental factors. Movebank has an iPhone and Android app to track wildlife and ongoing developments such as additional visualization tools and more data quality control / screening / correction tools. All researchers gathering movement data using radio tags or similar technologies are encouraged to archive their data in MoveBank.
5. **Bird Marking Program Standards Manual:** A standards manual intended to assist developing and established marking schemes work towards high ethical, scientific and data management

standard practices and the promotion of bird conservation world-wide was discussed. See

Appendix A for the outline. Several comments were provided by participants on aspects to consider in the document:

- Need to clarify the meaning of 'managed' in terms of who 'manages' the scheme
- Clarify terminology, especially for non-native English speakers (e.g., Re-encounter). May need a glossary.
- Data sharing (5.7) – what does that mean e.g. among researchers, among countries?
- What is the difference between licenses and permits? For example, in Japan there is a difference between a licence (valid 2 years from ringing scheme) and a permit (from government – annual renewal).
- Some countries (e.g., Russia) there is no federal permit, but banders may require a state permit.
- Need a recommendation about ensuring ringing scheme is involved in licensing all aspects of permitting. For example in Japan the government issues a permit to capture birds but if standard rings are not used, then it does not need to be coordinated with bird ringing scheme. A researcher can get a government permit to capture and mark birds, and use their own rings or other marks, instead of those from the ringing centre. This creates problems and different standards.
- Minimize duplication of information among sections of the manual.
- Data sharing is a big challenge if data are not standardized.
- Access to published data and raw data.
- Suggest including some case studies:
  - What works and what doesn't work
  - What are the different alternatives that do work
  - What features in some schemes work well, and which do not?

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- Foreigners visiting country with no ringing scheme can potentially create a conflict (e.g., in Mongolia).
  - Noted that an overly detailed manual may not get read. Need a summary of key features that are most important in each chapter.
6. **Updated questionnaire for Bird Marking Programs:** Additional questions to consider asking (offset by the request to make it simple!):
- a) Number of qualified banders
  - b) Number of birds marked per year
  - c) Who pays for rings?
  - d) What is budget for ringing scheme?
  - e) How is the ringing scheme financed?
  - f) Do staff from the ringing scheme carry out research or design studies?
  - g) Ask for information on associated organizations (e.g., Bird Banding Associations such as in Japan or North America)
  - h) Are there separate authorizations for different types of capture methods (e.g., marking birds as nestlings, using particular types of traps, mist nets, etc.).
  - i) Do trainees require their own permits?
  - j) Are there exams or other formal tests required to get a permit?
7. **Review of Terms of Reference for committee:** A terms of reference has been drafted and will be circulate to the wider community for comment.
8. **Committee Co-chairs:** Judit Szabo expressed interested in helping to co-chair the committee. Charles Francis offered to continue as a co-chair.
9. **Next Steps:**
- a. Circulate meeting notes and draft terms of reference to RCC on bird marking.
  - b. Provide committee information for the new IOU website:  
<http://www.internationalornithology.org/rcc2.html>
  - c. Complete and circulate the questionnaire.
  - d. Complete and circulate the Programs Standards Manual.



## **Appendix A**

### Bird Marking Program Standards Manual Outline

#### **1. Bird marking programs**

- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. What is a bird marking program?

#### **2. Ethical and Scientific Standards**

- 2.1. Promoting high ethical and scientific standards

#### **3. Program Operations: Permits**

- 3.1. Evaluating bird marking projects
- 3.2. Training for ringers/banders
- 3.3. Permits

#### **4. Program Operations: Markers**

- 4.1. Issuing and management of markers
- 4.2. Auxiliary marker use and coordination

#### **5. Program Operations: Data Management**

- 5.1. Data collection
- 5.2. Coordination of recoveries and reporting
- 5.3. Data use, analysis, and ownership

#### **6. Managing a Bird Marking Program**

- 6.1. Introduction to various program models
- 6.2. Components of a program

#### **7. Appendices**

- 7.1. Checklist for setting up a new ringing program
- 7.2. Costs considerations for ringing programs
- 7.3. Current banding networks with brief description and websites
- 7.4. List of current banding programs
- 7.5. Resources
- 7.6. Works Cited

#### **8. Figures**

- 8.1. Types of bird marking programs
- 8.2. Roles of bird marking programs