

Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

Bird Banding Laboratory: Recent Accomplishments



- **The Challenge:** Bird banding is one of the most indispensable techniques for studying the movement, survival and behavior of birds. The North American Bird Banding Program was established in 1920 and has evolved into the complex operation that supports the activities of approximately 2000 Master banders and more than 5000 subpermittees.



- **The Science:** The Bird Banding Program supports the work of federal and state conservation agencies, the academic community, nongovernmental organizations, professional and amateur ornithologists, and businesses. Banding and encounter datasets serve important roles promulgating hunting regulations, monitoring bird populations, restoring endangered species, investigating aspects of bird behavior and ecology, and addressing issues of human health and safety related to birds.

- **Recent Accomplishments:** The Bird Banding Program continues to modernize its data management processes. In 2010, hard copy records of band encounter information totaling approximately 4.5 million microfilm images and 2 million paper records were converted to digital files. A new version of the Bandit banding data management software was released to improve the electronic submission of banding data, allowing the processing of approximately 1.3 million banding records and 90,000 band encounter records annually.



- **The Future:** Planned activities include completing development of a data management system for local recapture data and revisions to the Bandit software to allow for the electronic submission of recapture data. A redesigned website will improve access to banding data and information about the banding program. The Bird Banding Laboratory will work with banding programs in other countries to promote coordinated bird banding across the hemisphere.