

Bird Banding Laboratory



- **The Challenge:** Bird banding is one of the most indispensable techniques for studying the movement, survival and behavior of birds and has been an integral component of ornithology for more than one hundred years. 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 5000 subpermittees. It is currently administered by the United States Geological Survey, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and the Canadian Wildlife Service with joint coordination dating from 1923.



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



- **The Future:** The Bird Banding Laboratory issues permits allowing people and organizations to band birds, distributes bird bands to banders, and maintains the banding and band encounter databases. Information from bands that are subsequently found and reported to the Bird Banding Laboratory provides data on the distribution and movements of species, their relative numbers, annual production, longevity and causes of death. This information increases our knowledge and understanding of the ecology of birds and the status of their populations; important information for the management and conservation of migratory birds across the continent.