

Bird Banding at Allegra Collister Nature Preserve - Spring and Fall 2002

Rather than a seasonal report, this report covers banding for the year 2002. Despite being a quasi annual report, there is very little to report. Activity at ACNP was minimal.

All of the banders were preoccupied, at one time or another, during the usual banding seasons. Everyone did want to do at least a little bit of banding, when time permitted, in spite of the fact that their sabbatical was overdue. We tried.

In late spring, two days of banding produced 9 different species totaling only 15 birds. One of the days (June 8th) was the gulch clean up party. For those who stayed late, they were treated to the capture and banding of an uncommon species --- a Yellow-billed Cuckoo. That was the payoff for having put in a hard days work. A bonus.

The fall effort wasn't much better. Only four days of banding for 32 birds of 11 species.

No new species were either banded or sighted.

There were a few returning birds that are worthy of note. A male Bullock's Oriole first banded in spring 1999 came back to enjoy the gulch again. From spring of 2001: a male Blue Grosbeak, a Western Wood Peewee, and an Orange-crowned Warbler. Smart birds know that ACNP is special and keep coming back for more. Who were the local returnees? Black-capped Chickadee from the class of fall 2000 and an Oregon Junco banded in fall 2001. They can't stay away either.

Routine walk throughs were accomplished on several occasions. Nothing out of the ordinary was noted. A bear continues to leave its calling cards. Water was in short supply. The springs never stopped flowing; but, the flow rate had decreased significantly. The gulch seems to be healthy and is supporting the usual variety of critters.

What are the prospects for bird banding in the 2003 seasons? It's somewhat uncertain as of this writing. No one has stepped forward to assume the role of lead bander. A few of the tools of the trade are in need of repair or replacement. Many of the nets are suffering severe UV damage and/or are in need of mending. Some nets are beyond repair and will need to be replaced. At least the bridges have new decking and the work table is in good condition.

It's safe to assume that bird banding will continue at ACNP. Will it be attended to as diligently as in years past? Maybe. What's needed is an infusion of young blood. Volunteers full of energy and enthusiasm who are willing to make a commitment. Who can we recruit?

The history and tradition of bird banding at the gulch, ACNP, is extremely valuable.

The data collected will prove to be a rich and rewarding resource for a many investigators and researchers.

The bird banders: Virginia Dionigi, Tony Esposito, Joe Harrison, Maggie Boswell, Tom Delaney