

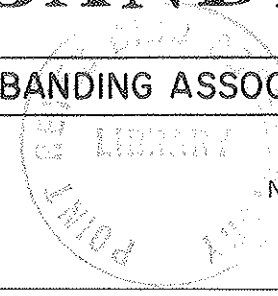
# WESTERN BIRD BANDER

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT

At the risk of a charge of extravagance, I'd like to use a small amount of our precious journal space to thank W.B.B.A. members for your help and support this year. In response to our requests for financial help, many extra contributions, many new Sustaining Memberships, and several Life Memberships have come in. We feel this indicates the value that members place on the *Western Bird Bander*.

We'll continue to try to improve your journal and justify the obvious concern you have shown for the W.B.B.A. We're also continuing our efforts toward helping to merge the North American banding publications and then to bring the banders the most comprehensive information possible.

Thanks again.

TERRY WAHL



### NEW LIFE MEMBER

William Pepper, 445 E. Abington Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19118

NETTING SUCCESS VS. TIME OF DAY

Table 1. Number of birds captured during 36 days in fall 1969 when nets were run from 06:00 to 20:00 hours.

	No. before 13:00	No. after 13:00	% before 13:00	1968	1969
Hermit Thrush	17	0	100	78.0	76.0
Swainson's Thrush	32	0	100	88.0	87.4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	9	2	82	90.0	92.7
Warbling Vireo	46	8	85	62.5	†
Orange-crowned Warbler	7	3	70	79.0	78.0
Townsend's Warbler	21	1	95	81.5	82.0
Wilson's Warbler	43	9	83	84.0	79.0
White-crowned Sparrow*	33	4	43	74.0	73.4
Golden-crowned Sparrow	20	6	77	85.0	88.0
Fox Sparrow	18	1	95	67.0	60.0
Total	216	34	86.4	74.0	73.0
				79.0	80.0
				Total	77.0

† Only six birds captured

Figure 1. Birds captured per hour of nets run.

Hour	06:00	07:00	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00
Overcast	2.7	4.0	7.3	3.8	4.0	4.7	3.0	2.1	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	1.3	2.0
Sunny	13.4	7.8	6.6	4.0	9.6	5.0	2.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	6.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	4.0

\* (pugetensis)

ANNUAL REPORT

An analysis of bird-banding reports for the year 1970 within the area of the Western Bird-Banding Association  
 Compiled by Michael San Miguel

SPECIES	Alaska	Yukon B.C. Alberta	Washington Oregon	Montana Idaho	California	Nevada Utah	Colorado Wyoming	Mexico Arizona New Mexico	TOTAL	Largest Individual Total	By Whom
Eared Grebe				1			1		1	1	Moos
Western Grebe					1		1		1	1	Robinson
Pied-billed Grebe					18		18		18	16	Bloom & Aron
Leach's Petrel					212		212		212	212	PRBO
Ashy Petrel											PRBO
White Pelican					200	101	154	813	455	200	Tule Lake NWR
Brown Pelican					2				815	813	Keith
Double-crested Cormorant					100		2		102	100	Tule Lake NWR
Brandt's Cormorant		108			153				261	153	PRBO
Pelagic Cormorant	23	92			8				123	92	Campbell
Great Blue Heron				23	57	49	9		160	57	Tule Lake NWR
Green Heron		22			3				3	1 each	San Miguel, Feltes, Sheppard
Snowy Egret					1	292	18		423	222	Robinson
Black-crowned Night Heron									393	273	Robinson
White-faced Ibis									310	200	A. Smith - DWRC
Whistling Swan	9	348		5					362	348	Barry
Trumpeter Swan		472	5	56					62	56	Red Rock Lakes NWR
Canada Goose	657	853	834		3,234	1,880	2,662	95	10,687	1,802	California F & G
Black Brant	643				54		1		739	643	Clarence Rhode NWR
White-fronted Goose									223	168	Barry
Snow Goose		5		4,225	521	586	10,188	58	579	521	Tule Lake NWR
Mallard					1,380			1,000	21,742	4,616	Colorado F & G
Mexican Duck				1	39	2		19	19	19	Bosque del Apache NWR
Black Duck									1	1	Charles M. Russell NWR
Gadwall									202	142	Monta Vista NWR
Pintail	2	4	1,115	200	3,709	3,267	1,259	172	9,728	1,726	Utah Div. F & G
Green-winged Teal	1		68	14	1,030	166	331		1,610	1,002	Salton Sea NWR
Blue-winged Teal				672			3		675	636	Bowdoin NWR
Cinnamon Teal			92		228	70	288		298	83	Salton Sea NWR
Bl.-winged &/or Cinn. Teal					60	1			441	217	Monta Vista NWR
American Widgeon			171		1,083	24	25	260	1,563	1,070	Salton Sea NWR
Shoveler			9	3	50	1	2		65	50	Tule Lake NWR
Wood Duck			57		38				95	40	Oregon State Game
Redhead			28	1		448	352	3	832	218	Monta Vista NWR
Ring-necked Duck					2	1	3		6	3	Monta Vista NWR
Canvasback					456	296			752	437	California F & G
Canvasback X Redhead						1			1	1	Nevada F & G
Greater Scaup		4	1		300	1			306	297	California F & G
Lesser Scaup		108			283	93	17		501	143	California F & G
Common Goldeneye					7				7	7	Oakland Parks Dept.
Barrow's Goldeneye											
Bufflehead			2		7	1			1	1	Nevada F & G
Spectacled Eider	4					10			19	10	Nevada F & G
Surf Scoter					1				4	4	Clarence Rhode NWR
Ruddy Duck					3	54	1		1	1	PRBO
									58	44	Utah Div. F & G

Note: Totals for Yukon, British Columbia, and Alberta include all birds banded west of longitude 110° Northwest Territories.

NETTING SUCCESS IN RELATION TO TIME OF DAY AND SUNNY VS. OVERCAST SKIES

Bob Stewart

At Point Reyes Bird Observatory where nets have traditionally been run during all daylight hours, much discussion of the efficiency of such an effort has been made. Ten of the most abundantly captured migrant species were counted on 36 days during the fall of 1969 when nets were run from dawn to dusk (*Table 1*). This small sample was run to compare with all days during the fall migrations of 1968 and 1969 (15 August to 15 November) because there were some days during these years when nets were not up until one or two hours after dawn and other days when they were closed before dusk. The per cent of birds for each species captured before 13:00 in the small sample did not differ significantly from the entire 1968-1969 period (*Table 2*). Thus, confidence was established for using all days during the fall migration periods during 1968-1969.

A striking fact was the similarity for each species in per cent captured before 13:00 during both years (*Table 2*). However, there were differences among species. For example, only 8.2% of Swainson's Thrushes and 12.4% of Hermit Thrushes were caught in the afternoon, but 38.6% of White-crowned Sparrows (*pugctensis*) were caught at that time. Of a total of 1,981 captures during the two seasons, 1,535 (77.5%) were taken before 13:00.

Analysis of data from 14 to 30 June 1969 reveals a difference in morning peaks on sunny versus overcast days (*Figure 1*). On nine overcast days (high fog and no wind), the morning peak was from 08:00 to 08:59. On seven sunny days (with no wind), the highest capture rate was during the hour immediately after dawn (06:00 to 06:59). There is evidence that birds have a circadian periodicity in relation to locomotor activity. Could light intensity delay this circadian activity and account for the later peak capture on overcast days? Or is the difference between peaks related to the abundant evidence that air temperature and feeding intensity of birds are inversely related? As expected, the hourly temperatures at PRBO are lower on sunny days than on overcast days (*Table 3*). Could the lower temperature during the night before sunny days be a stimulus for increased feeding activity and thus result in the peak capture in mist nets at that time? One factor which cannot be ruled out on overcast days is the possibility that early morning fog caused droplets to form on the nets and made them more visible to birds. This may account, at least partially, for the later morning peak on overcast days.

*Table 3.* Hourly temperature on sunny and overcast days from 14 to 30 June 1969.

Time	06:00	07:00	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00
Overcast	49.0	49.0	50.0	51.4	53.3	55.0	57.3
Sunny	44.5	44.8	48.9	52.9	56.3	59.5	62.4

*Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Mesa Road, Bolinas, California 94924*

We have received another memorial letter for the late Carl Richardson, this one from his good friend and fellow bander of 45 years standing, Johnson A. Neff of Englewood, Colorado. They first met when cooperating on a project to determine the effect of woodpeckers on Oregon fruit crops. Together, they discovered the first known nesting colony of Tricolored Blackbirds in Oregon, and Mr. Richardson began his long and valuable study of this species.

## APPLICATION OF AN ANALYSIS OF WING LENGTH IN SWAINSON'S THRUSHES

Robert M. Stewart

## INTRODUCTION

The Swainson's Thrush (*Hylocichla ustalata ustalata*) breeds from southeastern Alaska through coastal British Columbia, western Washington, and western Oregon to southern and western California west of the Cascades and Sierra Nevada (American Ornithologists' Union. 1957. Check-list of North American Birds.). During migration the sexes of *H.u. ustalata* cannot be readily distinguished. However, by comparing the mean wing lengths of Swainson's Thrushes taken from museum skins and those taken in the field, I suggest that individuals caught in mist nets in California during the period 1-13 May 1970 were predominantly males.

## METHODS

The wing chord (unflattened) of 100 male and 51 female Swainson's Thrushes, from the collection at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California at Berkeley, was measured with dial calipers to the nearest one-tenth of a millimeter. The results were then rounded to the nearest whole millimeter. Mean wing lengths were calculated for Swainson's Thrushes captured in northern and southern California during the spring 1970 Operation Transect.

## RESULTS

As expected, there is a significant difference between the mean wing lengths of male and female Swainson's Thrushes (Fig. 1). In order to find out if there was any difference in mean wing length of males in various parts of the breeding range, I calculated separately the mean for birds taken in June or July in Alaska, British Columbia, Oregon, and California. There was virtually no difference in mean wing lengths of males in these breeding areas (Table 1).

The mean wing lengths of all Swainson's Thrushes captured in mist nets at selected stations during the 1970 spring transect are shown in Table 2. The mean wing length calculated from this field data was 95.9 mm, which is virtually the same as that calculated from museum skins (96.0 mm). This strongly suggests that the individual Swainson's Thrushes captured in early May 1970 from the Mexican Border to Sacramento were predominantly males.

In May of 1971, nets were run daily at the Wool Ranch in Milpitas. The mean wing length of Swainson's Thrushes from 1-11 May was 94.8 mm suggesting that, as in 1970, individuals caught during that time were predominantly males (Table 3). From 22-31 May, the mean wing length was 92.4 mm, suggesting that most of these individuals were females.

Until a better method is found to distinguish the sexes of Swainson's Thrushes, the use of mean wing length suggests that males migrate before females in California during the spring.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the following persons for data taken in the field: Jon Atwood, Leo Best, Gerry and David Blume, William Clow, Virginia Coughran, Lloyd Cowley, David DeSante, David O'Keefe, Richard Scheible, Tom Taylor, and Peter Ward. Special thanks to L. Richard Mewaldt and his students at the Wool Ranch who allowed me to use their wing length data taken in 1970 and 1971.

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WING LENGTH – SWAINSON'S THRUSH

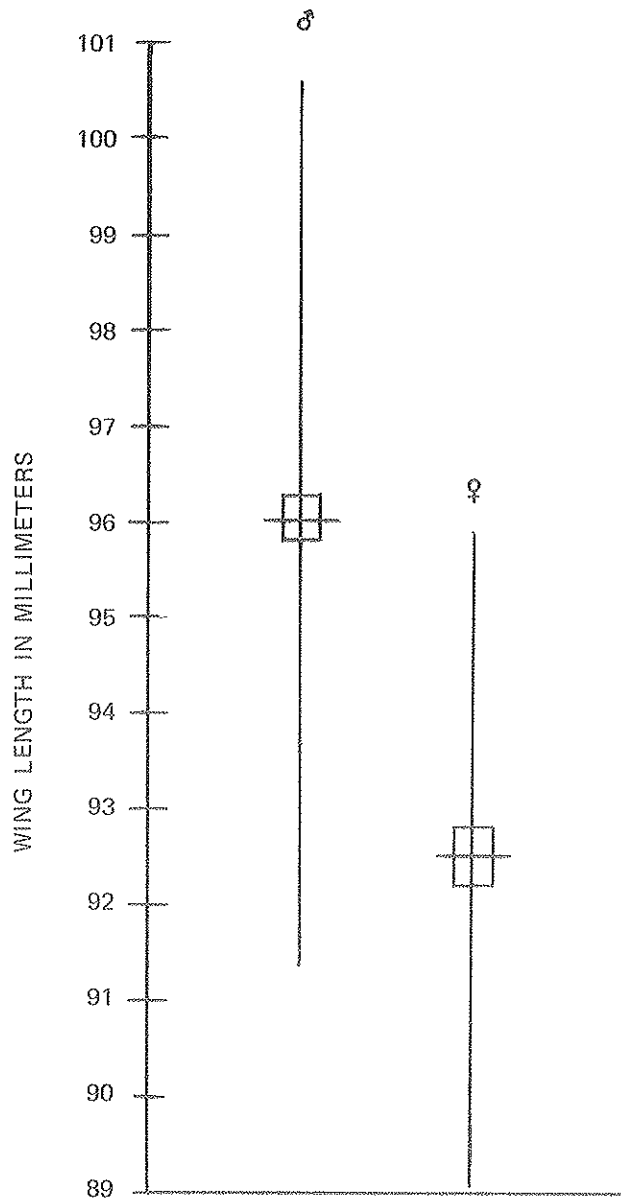


Figure 1. Wing Length of Swainson's Thrush. Horizontal line represents the mean; wide verticle bar represents the 95% confidence limits of the sample.

Table 1. Mean Wing Length (mm) Male Swainson's Thrushes		
Area	Number	Mean
Alaska	12	96.7
British Columbia	21	95.8
Oregon	20	96.1
California	17	96.4

Table 2. Mean Wing Length (mm) of Swainson's Thrushes Captured 4-13 May 1970.		
Southern California	Number	Mean
San Diego	35	95.6
Duarte	24	97.2
Brock Ranch	49	94.6
Total	108	95.5
Northern California		
Wool Ranch (Milpitas)	92	95.9
Sacramento	12	98.0
Knight's Ferry	28	97.2
S.F. Watershed	22	95.8
Total	154	96.3
Grand Total	262	95.9

Table 3. Mean Wing Length (mm) of Swainson's Thrushes at Wool Ranch in 1971.		
Date	Number	Mean
May 1-11	49	94.8
May 12-21	57	93.3
May 22-31	91	92.4

