



Australian Government

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme

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FLIGHTLINES

Newsletter of the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme

Number 28 – July 2010

Edited by David Drynan

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BANDING OFFICE UPDATE

Staff changes

Well, it's been far too long!! Sorry for the delay in getting another Flightlines out to all of you. The Banding Office remains in the Migratory Birds Section, within the Marine Division of DEWHA. This means that we are working very closely with the policy and program officers who are working to conserve migratory birds. As many of you would be aware, Banding Office staff now consists of myself (full time) and Lisa Hardy (four days per week). This has meant our ability to produce publications such as Flightlines has been restricted. We both appreciate your patience when waiting on replies from us. We will get back to you – it will just take a little longer than it used to.

We have also moved offices, and are now located in the south of Canberra in Woden. The new street address is:

ABBBS, DEWHA
Level 5
Lovett Tower
13 Keltie Street
WODEN ACT 2606

Our postal address remains unchanged and should be used for all letters & parcels.

Annual Fee Increase

ABBBS annual fees are being reviewed currently and are likely to be raised in line with CPI to help cover the increasing cost of bands, freight and database development. The fees have not been increased (with the exception of the introduction of GST) since their inception in 1996. The fees for the upcoming year will not be affected and will remain at \$54.25 (inc GST). Further information will be sent to all banders once the review is complete.

Annual Reports and Fees due soon

Banders are reminded that ABBBS annual projects are due 31 July. If your project renewal paperwork has not arrived, please contact David as an urgent priority. If applicable, your annual fees invoice is enclosed with this copy of Flightlines, and you have 30 days in which to settle your account. Banders failing to pay their fees within 30 days will have their banding authorities cancelled.

New Website address

The ABBBS website has moved home location to:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/science/abbbs/>

All of the forms you need to apply for new banders, projects, location codes or colour marking authorities are available from the site.

ABBBS Web Portal

As many of you have already discovered, we have spent a lot of time and resources developing a secure bander-only web portal where you can validate and submit your banding data, as well as checking on your band issues and registered locodes. There are instruction cards available for all of the processes, or you can contact Lisa or David for help.

The web portal is located at:

<https://secure.deh.gov.au/deh/biodiversity/science/abbbs/> or from the link on the home page.

Copies of journal articles

Please remember to send the ABBBS a copy of any journal article that you publish from your banding studies. You can send them in with your annual project reports. Electronic copies in PDF format are preferred if possible. Having copies of your papers help us to illustrate the value of the ABBBS and banding in general. Many thanks to the banders that have already been sending them in.

Data Despatch Summaries ('Greens') still required

Many banders are neglecting to submit Data Despatch Summaries ('greens') with their data. Banders are reminded that greens must be included every time data is submitted to the ABBBS. The greens help banding office staff to locate your data when a recovery is made, and to help us summarise what has been happening in each project. Most importantly, they allow us to monitor the rate of banding mortalities in each project. Data submissions will be returned to you if greens are not submitted with your data. If you submit your data via the secure web portal outlined above, the greens are automatically produced and you do not have to do anything else.

Request for updated contact details and permissions

Banders are asked to fill out the form enclosed with this issue and return it to the Banding Office. This is to ensure that we have the appropriate permission from you before passing on any personal information to potential banders or researchers seeking permission to use the data you have collected. You can use this form to request confidentiality on the data you collect (see section on page 3). If we do not have this form from you, data collected under your project is freely available to whoever requests it.

NEW BAND DESIGNS AND MORATORIUMS

There have been recent developments in the designs for bands for several species, following concerns raised by banders about the suitability of earlier designs. These include:

Ban on the use of Penguin Flipper bands

No new projects involving flipper banding of Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) have been approved by the ABBBS for the past 6 years, but we have allowed some existing projects to continue in the meantime. A paper authored by Peter Dann at the Phillip Island Nature Park is now in review that outlines reduced survival for penguins carrying flipper bands. Following the recommendations outlined in the paper, the ABBBS has placed a ban on the use of flipper bands on any species of penguin. Most existing projects have already switched to using Passive Induction Transponders (PITs), so this change should not affect many banders. Banders holding stocks of size 19 Stainless Steel flipper bands are asked to return these to the ABBBS at their earliest convenience.

New Swan band – Size 35 Stainless Steel

Following on from the last Flightlines, the bands designed for Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) have been changed again after unacceptable wear rates were experienced. Black Swans may now only be banded with the new specially designed swan bands (size 35 SS). None are to be banded with the C-shaped size 14 or 15 Stainless Steel, nor the size 35 AM. Banders will only be issued with these bands when they operate a project specifically related to the study of this species. Approvals and bands will not be issued for incidental banding of this species as part of community projects. Banders with stocks of the old designs are asked to return these to the ABBBS. Many thanks to Raoul Mulder for his assistance with this issue.

New Pelican Bands – Size 17 Stainless Steel

Australian Pelican (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) bands (17 SS) have been recorded opening up prematurely on the bird. We suspect that the end-opening is the cause of the problems and have moved to a side-opening design. It is slightly smaller than the previous design (34mm x 17mm). Banders with stocks of the old design are asked to return these to the ABBBS. Many thanks to David Nicholls and Max Waterman for their assistance.

New large Eagle lock-on bands – Size 15 Stainless Steel

There has been anecdotal evidence for several years that large eagles such as the White-bellied Sea-Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) are able to remove the standard butt-ended size 15 Stainless Steel bands. The ABBBS has sourced a new design that incorporates a lock-on mechanism to prevent the band being removed. These bands will only be issued to banders that specifically target large eagles as part of their projects. Banders with stocks of the old design are asked to return these to the ABBBS. Many thanks to Victor Hurley and Terry Dennis for their assistance.

New bands for Purple-crowned Lorikeet – Size 36 Stainless Steel

Following a historical check of banding records and public recoveries, a moratorium has been placed on using either size 23 or 24 Stainless Steel bands on Purple-crowned Lorikeets (*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*). The ABBBS has sourced new 'donna' style bands (round cross section, the same as sizes 31 through 34) with a 4.7mm internal diameter. Only size 36SS bands may be used on this species from now on. Banders with stocks of 23s or 24s that were originally issued for use on this species are asked to return them to the ABBBS. Size 36SS bands may also be useful for some of the *Neophema* parrots with short tarsi. However, please contact the ABBBS before placing these new bands on any *Neophema* species. Many thanks to David Paton, Bob Horwood and Oliver Fuller for their assistance.

New bands for Shearwaters – Size 37 and Size 38 Stainless Steel

Following suggestions and comments from seabird banders, we have sourced two new bands that are suitable for larger (eg Flesh-footed) and smaller (eg Little) shearwater species. The dimensions for these new bands are 8.0mm x 3.5mm (37SS) and 11.0mm x 5.0mm (38SS). The designs have been used successfully by the New Zealand National Banding Scheme for several years. These bands will only be issued to banders that have projects that target shearwater species other than Short-tailed or Wedge-tailed. Many thanks to Lindsay Smith and Graeme Taylor (New Zealand) for their assistance.

NEW POLICY ON ABBBS PROCESSING OF COLOUR MARKED BIRDS

The ABBBS has traditionally responded directly to members of the public that make sightings of colour marked birds. The response is usually in the form of a formal written recovery report.

ABBBS resources are limited, and we are unable to continue processing sightings of colour marked birds by the public or other researchers.

This policy covers all types of colour marking such as colour bands, leg flags (both plain & individually engraved), neck collars, wing tags etc that are part of an approved ABBBS banding project.

The new procedure for colour mark sightings will be as follows:

- All communications received by the ABBBS relating to colour marked birds will be forwarded onto the relevant project holder to respond to if the origin can be established. The finder must give their permission to pass on contact details to the bander.
- The ABBBS will respond to the finder to thank them for the report, and will provide the banders details to them. If appropriate permissions are in place, the ABBBS will also forward the message so the bander can respond directly. Banders must provide the ABBBS with written permission to release their contact details (form attached and also available from the ABBBS website).
- If the bander of the bird cannot be established, the finder will be thanked for their report and no further correspondence will be entered into.
- If the project holder feels that the record is important and should be added to the ABBBS database, this is to be done in electronic format as a retrap with normal data submissions. A new locode may need to be registered with the incoming data.
- Ad hoc requests to respond to finders will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

If a project holder requires the services of the ABBBS to assist with processing sightings and responding to the public to meet their project objectives, they will need to apply to the ABBBS in writing. Applications for assistance will only be approved if time and resources allow. Banders are expected to state if they have a need for the ABBBS to perform this work for them on any new applications for colour marking.

If a study relies heavily on sightings from the public, the project holder will now need to direct resources to responding to the public about the birds they are marking.

Recoveries of ABBBS bands made by members of the public will continue to be processed in the usual manner.

PROJECT APPROVALS

Two-hundred and thirty-five (235) new projects have been approved since 1 July 2003. As there are so many new projects to report on, we have not included any details here. If you would like to know about any new projects, please contact David directly.

ABBBS POLICY ON DATA CONFIDENTIALITY

The ABBBS policy on data confidentiality is reprinted below for your information. If you would like your data to be kept confidential whilst you analyse your results, please use the enclosed form.

(Reprinted from 'Revised Licensing and Project Management Procedures for the ABBBS', 1992)

Confidentiality Procedures

The confidentiality procedures developed during the meeting of the Banding Scheme Specialist Working Group, October 1984 are to be retained and are outlined below. The banding scheme will be reviewing confidentiality categories for banders with long-term projects who have placed strict confidentiality on the use of their data. The scheme cannot support projects where the data are not being analysed by the bander and are not available to other banders for analysis and/or publication.

Extract from Specialist Working Group Report, October 1984.**Availability of Core Data**

Both core data and additional data should be available unless specified by a confidentiality bar.

Duration of Confidentiality

- Confidentiality of data should be approved only on submission of a written request by the bander.
 - Confidentiality should be available for a maximum initial period of five years from the date of application.
 - Extension of confidentiality beyond the initial five year period should require a written application, and be at the discretion of the ABBBS.
 - Who is banding what species should not be subject to confidentiality.
- ('Bander' in this context means the bander who is responsible for submitting the data)

Please contact David if you have any questions regarding this policy.

BILL BOARD

First recovery of a banded Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*) for Australia.

A UK banded Manx Shearwater was recovered in November 1961 at Venus Bay, SA. The recovery details had not been reported to the ABBBS until 2008 when David happened to be looking through the BTO (UK Banding Scheme) website at their longest recorded movements. As it turns out, this recovery was displayed on their website as an illustration on where birds banded in the UK have turned up, as it is the longest movement recorded for any bird banded in the UK.

(http://www.bto.org/ringing/ringinfo/recovery_stories.htm#Manx)

The details:

Band 2057768 was placed upon an adult Manx Shearwater on 9 September 1960 at Skokholm Island, Wales, UK. Recovered dead on 22 November 1961 at Venus Bay, SA. Time elapsed: 1 year, 2 months and 13 days, distance moved: 16208km.

This is the only banding or recovery record of this species in Australia. Thanks to Jacquie Clark at the BTO for supplying the banding and recovery details.