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(Neb.)-Bird Banding Station At Chadron State Park Provides Important Data

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 09/04/2013 11:23 AM

(CHADRON)-The 6th Annual Bird Banding Station was held at Chadron State Park last weekend, and organizers say the event was very successful. A total of 20 birds, representing nine different species were netted, weighed, measured, sexed, aged and banded. More than 65 people participated in the birding station, and several children enjoyed helping release the newly banded birds.

Maggie Vinson, the Nebraska Education Coordinator for the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, says, "Bird banding is very important to provide information and data about how different bird species and populations live in the wild and respond to changes. We also learn about migratory patterns, where they stop along the way and their destinations. If tracking shows significant changes, our scientists study what is causing the change. For non-migrating species, we can track important data about population densities in relation to environmental shifts.

According to Phil Dobesh, Pine Ridge District Wildlife Biologist, there are several hundred banding stations that track bird behaviors in North America, including the two educational stations in western Nebraska at Chadron State Park and Wildcat Hills near Scottsbluff. Each band has a unique number, and data is recorded for when and where the bird was banded, the time and location of where birds may be caught, and when they die, but only if someone finds them and reports the information.

"Anyone can help gather information," said Vinson. "For example, if a sparrow flies into your window and dies, and you notice a leg band, report the band number to the Bird Banding Lab (BBL). With the band number, they can tell you the bird's unique information, including how far it has traveled," she said.

To report bird bands, visit www.reportband.gov, call toll-free 800-327-2263 or e-mail BBL@usgs.gov. All bird banding data is centralized at the BBL and is jointly administered by the United States Geological Survey and the Canadian Wildlife Service. The North American Bird Banding Lab website is located at <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/>.

The Annual Bird Banding is hosted by the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory in partnership with Chadron State Park, Nebraska Game & Parks, Nebraska Environmental Trust and the Pine Ridge Ranger District of the Nebraska National Forests & Grasslands.

--U.S.Forest Service