

2012 MOPL BANDING PROTOCOL

Weather Criteria:

Do Not attempt banding during rain, winds > 20 mph, or temperatures above 80°F when nest is in direct sunlight. Generally trapping and banding will occur from sunrise to mid morning and from late afternoon to sunset. Neither eggs nor adults should be at risk of overheating or hypothermia.

Trapping procedure:

Park the pickup off the edge of county road or a two-track near the nest but not so close that the adult MOPL is disturbed or leaves the nest site. Test the transmitter and soldering iron. Tie down the trap to ATV with bungee cords.

Approach nest on ATV. Float the eggs to verify hatch date. Then place the cage trap over the nest with the nest in the center of cage and trap door facing the direction you will be approaching after adult is trapped. Be sure to check the trap door so it will close with no obstructions. Set the catch on the trap door very light so it will trip easily. Return to the pickup or another distant view point. If possible, use spotting scope to determine when adult is caught. Give the adult 30 minutes to return, depending on weather conditions. If the adult does not return or enter the trap in that time period, remove trap and return later that day or the next day.

While waiting for adult to be trapped, prepare all equipment and datasheet.

Trapped Adult: After the adult is caught or enters the trap, approach the trap at a high rate of speed on ATV or on foot from the door side of the trap, in case the door has not closed. Close the trap door if it is still open. Open top door on trap, capture adult in hand, and place adult in the bird bag, head into the back corner of the bag. Place mouse pad on top of trap to cast a shadow on the eggs to avoid overheating while banding the adult. Remember to leave the nest area opposite the way you approached (i.e., continue in a straight line and then circle back to ATV).

Return to the pickup with adult in the bird bag at a steady speed on ATV to begin the banding procedure. Once capture is confirmed, assistant can begin recording data on banding datasheet, including location, weather info, capture time, and banding code/frequency to be used.

Banding Procedure:

Weigh bird in the bag. Later weigh bag alone to get tare weight. Choose unused band code. Put on USGS band and clamp closed. Put on three color bands and solder in center of band to seal edges, being careful not to burn self or bird. Double check band code (upper right, lower right, upper left, lower left). Note on banding datasheet and color combination sheet. All bands go on the tarsus.

Collect remaining data on datasheet, including morphometric measurements. These include keel (body condition), tarsus, beak, and wing chord length. Be sure empty bird bag has been weighed.

Attach transmitter either by blowing on upper back feathers to create a "hole" or by lifting some of the back feathers with forceps, nail scissors, or popsicle stick. Super Glue gel seems to work better than epoxy for applying transmitters. Remove magnet from transmitter and apply glue all the way around the transmitter. Use plenty of glue, but not so much that it drips off or oozes sideways onto bird. Apply transmitter to foundation feathers on upper back, but behind wing attachment area. Top feathers that were lifted up can now be pushed onto top of transmitter, so it is sandwiched in back feathers as

high on back as is practical. Keep bird relatively still for 1 minute while glue sets. Some back feathers may need to be trimmed slightly (< 1 cm) to make it more difficult for bird to grab hold of feathers and pull off transmitter. See photos for more information. DO NOT contact skin with glue or breath fumes. Transmitter should not be visible, except for antenna.

Release:

Release bird next to nest (not in it) as shown in *handle.release.jpg* or further down that crop strip, placing bird's feet on the ground. Recheck nest and adult MOPL within 48 hours (observe through spotting scope) and begin tracking.

Data Entry:

Enter data into our Excel database on a regular basis. At end of season, copy data into bird banding coordinator's (Nancy Gobris's) spreadsheet.