

Western Canada Cooperative Preseason Waterfowl Banding Program

Banding is a form of marking that involves the attachment of a metallic ring (i.e., band) to the legs of waterfowl. Each band has an imprinted unique code that is used to identify individual banded birds and their recovery records. Successful waterfowl banding programs have provided critical information for waterfowl conservation and management, leading to reliable knowledge of waterfowl ecology, behavior, and population dynamics. In particular, banding and band encounter reports, primarily from hunters, allow waterfowl managers to estimate harvest rates, survival rates, and assess movements and the structure of populations. The importance of these data to waterfowl management has increased with the formal use of predictive models which inform decision making through adaptive management protocols. Banding data is most useful when it is derived through a large-scale, coordinated effort with proper scientific rigor and careful consideration of monitoring designs related to specific research or management needs. The North American waterfowl banding program has been a joint responsibility of the U.S. and Canadian governments since 1920, and the Western Cooperative Waterfowl Banding Program is a critical component of this partnership.

A banding assignment typically lasts about 3 1/2 weeks in August, start and end times are normally 3-5 August to 28-30 August and do not include the travel to/from Canada which can add up to 3 or 4 days to both ends of a trip. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service operates banding stations in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the Northwest Territories. Banding participants are, at times, required to work 10-14 hour days in the field, 7 days a week. Physical activity is required, including lifting and carrying grain bags of 30-40lbs, wire, and other banding equipment to traps sites. Wearing hip boots and walking short distances in water and mud is necessary. On the job training in banding techniques, waterfowl speciation, and sex and age determination will be provided. While helpful and desirable, no prior banding or waterfowl experience is necessary.

A passport is required for this assignment, if you are a Government employee an official passport is required, other participants will need a tourist passport or passport card. Canada has strict entry requirements, past criminal or drunken driving convictions can be grounds for barring entry into the country.

This assignment allows participants to learn in depth how to trap, identify, sex, age and band waterfowl and, depending on the individuals past experiences and where the individual is assigned may provide the practical knowledge to operate a banding station in the future.

Participants who are not Federal employees will work under a formal Federal volunteer agreement. The participant will have all travel expenses (including a daily allowance for food and miscellaneous expenses at Federal per diem rates) paid for by the Division of Migratory Bird Management.

<http://www.fws.gov/birds/surveys-and-data/bird-banding/waterfowl-banding-blog.php>

Resumes will be accepted until April 1, 2019 and should be emailed to Phil Thorpe at the email address below.

For additional information contact:

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