

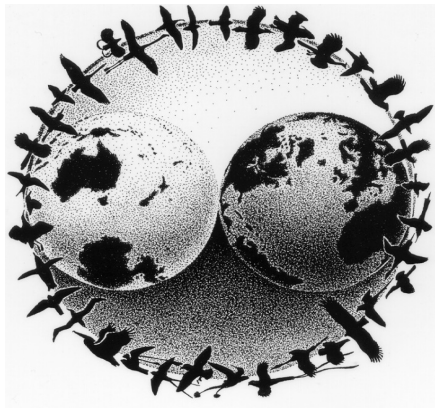
**Modeling Overwintering Survival of Declining Landbirds:
Field Logistics for the 2006-07
Monitoring Avian Winter Survival (MAWS) Program
on DOD Installations in Southeastern United States**

**Technical Report
to the Legacy Resources Management Program
for DoD Legacy Project Number 06-186**

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Field Logistics Report

We are pleased to report that as of September 25, 2006, we have finalized all of the field logistics for the Monitoring Avian Winter Survival (MAWS) project on four military installations in southeastern United States, Fort Chaffee and Camp Joseph Robinson in Arkansas; Fort Bragg in North Carolina; and Fort Benning in Georgia. In particular, we accomplished the following tasks:

- 1) The twenty-four stations on four installations that we gathered data from during most of the 2003-04 season and during the entirety of the 2004-05 and 2005-06 seasons have continued to provide sufficient capture rates to allow us to model overwintering survival for 25 target species, including five declining and four non-declining sparrow species. Thus, unless access to any of the 24 stations is curtailed or the habitat at any of the 24 stations becomes greatly modified, we do not foresee needing to relocate any stations this field season.

- 2) We contracted with the two supervising field biologists who will be training and overseeing the work of the field biologist interns who will be responsible for operating the mist nets and collecting the data during the winter. These two field biologists are Matthew Schaap and Bernadette Emmons. Matthew worked previously for three seasons as a field biologist intern for the MAPS program at Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana in the summer of 2003, at Fort Bragg in North Carolina in the summer of 2004, and again as a field biologist intern in 2005 at Sugar Grove in West Virginia. During the summer of 2006 Matthew worked as a biologist for the MAPS program, supervising three pairs of interns on military installations in Texas. During these four summers he has demonstrated mastery of MAPS protocol, excellent organizational skills, and utmost concern for birds' welfare. Bernadette Emmons was a MAWS field biologist supervising interns at Fort Bragg and Fort Benning during the 2005-06 season, continued as a MAPS biologist supervising three pairs of interns in Washington State during the summer of 2006, and has agreed to return for another season with MAWS. She has proven to be an excellent biologist and we have utmost confidence in her knowledge of MAWS protocol, her supervisory capabilities, and her concern for birds' welfare. We are also delighted that she has agreed to return as a MAWS biologist because her previous experience will enable her to lead the training session at Fort Chaffee, with the assistance of Matthew. Matthew Schaap will oversee the interns at the two Arkansas installations while Bernadette Emmons will provide supervision at the North Carolina and Georgia installations. We are extremely pleased to be able to have one supervising field biologists per two installations, because it means that we will have three people in the field at a station nearly half of the time. This will help us continue to run nets when bad weather is threatening (three people can close nets much more quickly than two when weather turns unfavorable) and will allow us to spend more time searching for color-banded birds (see 10 below).

- 3) We recruited eight field biologist interns who will be operating the six MAWS stations on each of the four installations in the Southeast during the winter of 2006-07. These are Bretta Tryon, Christopher McClure, James Junda, Ellen Welti, Sabrina West, Melissa VanderLinden, Margaret Muenich, and Kristen Comolli. All have had extensive previous experience working with birds in the field, and four have extensive previous banding and mist netting experience.

The interns will be assigned in pairs to each of the locations. These assignments will be established after the training program has concluded. They will be assigned based on the complementarity of their skills and experience, and by the fact that one intern at each location must provide a car for use in getting to and from the stations. We are extremely pleased with the resumes and experience of these eight interns and are confident that they will provide quality data. We are especially pleased that all eight intend to work for all five months (November through March) of the 2006-07 winter season. We will be hiring a ninth field biologist intern to assist in color-band resighting and behavioral observations at the Arkansas installations later in the season (beginning with the December pulse).

5) We have applied for and received all permits and authorizations needed for the 2006-07 field season. These include IBP's Master-Station federal bird-banding permit (issued by the USGS/Bird Banding Laboratory); bird-banding subpermits for each of the field biologists and interns issued under our Master-Station permit; state banding and collecting permits authorizing work by each of our biologists and interns from each state involved (AR, NC, GA, and AL); and, finally, color-band authorization for the target sparrow species using eight color-band colors.

6) We established the logistics for our 2006-07 MAWS intern training program, which will be held October 12-21, 2006, on Fort Chaffee. We held the training program at this location last year and both the training site and the logistics were quite successful. In order to not induce net shyness in any of the target individuals, we will not be conducting our training program at the actual MAWS stations, but at other appropriate locations on the installation. To ensure large numbers of birds for each intern, we will set up two training areas with four interns each; and to simplify housing logistics, all interns and field biologists will be camping at a public campground near Fort Chaffee.

7) We have succeeded in securing housing for the interns at each installation. Housing for interns (and the field biologist when present) at all four installations will be in rented apartments or cottages off the installations.

8) We have purchased all new supplies needed at each installation. Many of last year's supplies were stored on the installations, and we have checked with our contacts there and confirmed that everything we stored is present and will be awaiting our arrival.

9) Our MAWS Protocol Manual (formerly the same as the MoSI (Monitoreo de Sobrevivencia Invernal) Protocol Manual) was extensively revised and updated to more closely tailor it to MAWS protocols. The MAWS data sheets required only slight revisions, having been refined during the first two field seasons. We also made minor revisions to the intern instructional materials, including the MAWS Intern Training Course Syllabus, and the worksheets used to provide interns with an opportunity to apply the concepts they learn in training.

10) We have established detailed color-band protocols, including randomized selection of color-band combinations to be placed on the study species, and a standardized color-band resighting protocol that can be operated whenever three persons are working at a station (and possibly when only two are working as well). We will be continuing to color-band and resight three of the

target species (Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco) and thus increase the power of our models to detect differences in apparent overwintering survival rates among habitat types for these three species. In addition, we will dedicate an extra field biologist intern later in the season (as indicated above) to assist with color-band resightings and recording behavioral observations.

In summary, we are extremely pleased with all of the field logistics that we have worked out in preparation for the 2006-07 field season. While it is a maxim in field research to assume that something will go wrong, we are confident that we are as well prepared for the 2006-07 field season as possible.

All of us here at IBP are grateful for the funding and opportunity to conduct this important research in conjunction with the Legacy Resources Management Program. We are confident that the results of our work will help the Department of Defense conduct landscape-scale natural resource conservation and reverse the population declines of wintering sparrows on the installations, while simultaneously enhancing its military mission by improving military Readiness and Range Sustainment on the installations. Thank you very much.