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LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE BANDING ON THE PRAIRIES

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The Loggerhead Shrike was labelled by COSEWIC as threatened throughout Canada in 1986 and this designation remains in place for western Canada. In eastern Canada the status was raised to endangered in 2000 (COSEWIC 2001).² Since this was one of the species of special interest to the late Wayne C. Harris, and since knowledge of migration routes and winter quarters can be important for any threatened species, we reviewed the banding records through 2001 for the three prairie provinces.

Wayne banded his first 134 shrikes as a subpermittee, and the next 1666 under his full permit. In 1990 alone, he located 241 Loggerhead Shrike nests, which contained a total of 879 young, about half of which were old enough to band.³ Although he quit banding shrikes after the 1991 season, he was by far the most important bander of Loggerhead Shrikes in Saskatchewan and remains in second place for shrikes banded on the prairies (Table 1).

We have figures for almost all the Loggerhead Shrikes (285) banded by early Saskatchewan banders through to the end of 1954, but we do not have exact numbers of Loggerhead Shrikes banded in Alberta and Manitoba before the banding records were computerized in 1955. Another 8115 Loggerhead Shrikes were banded on the prairies between 1955 and 2000, most by Wayne Harris and the second and third authors of this paper.

From the early banding of 285 Loggerhead Shrikes in Saskatchewan and an unknown number in the two adjoining provinces, there were five recoveries of Saskatchewan birds and two of Alberta birds (Table 1). Since 1955 there have been 11 recoveries of dead birds and one trapping and release of a live bird (in Texas on 5 March!) from the 8115 individuals banded. This is an encounter rate of only 0.15%, less than one-tenth of the Saskatchewan reporting rate prior to 1954. This is part of a general trend observed for

most species banded in Saskatchewan, whereby the novelty/curiosity factor on the part of band finders resulted in a higher reporting rate in earlier years. In addition, before 1955, when the encounter rate for Saskatchewan shrikes was 1.75%, it was more common for people to shoot shrikes, in part because the shrike is disliked for its habit of killing small birds and then impaling them on thorns and barbed wire fences.

To learn the migration pathways and wintering grounds of prairie shrikes, we have combined the recoveries of all birds banded both before and after 1955. The geographic distribution of wintering birds is evident from the list of states: Texas, 8, all in late fall, winter and early spring; Oklahoma, 2 (in mid-winter); and Kansas, 1 (January). Two reported from Missouri in September and June, were evidently in migration. In addition, one flightless young banded in extreme southwestern Manitoba hit an object in extreme southeastern Saskatchewan, only about 10 km west of where it was banded, but sufficient to place the recovery in a different province. Three were found in the same province where banded, in August of the same year, within less than two months after banding. One has less confidence in the other two from the same province, one because of an inexact date, and one because it was reported as "band only."

Finally, the Alberta and Manitoba Loggerhead Shrike projects involved checking into the rates at which surviving adults and juveniles, many with a colour band as well as an aluminum band, were detected in subsequent years within the region where they were first banded. Collister and De Smet (1997), based on results from 1987 to 1994, found that rates of return in the year following banding were 3 of 249 (1.2%) for juveniles and 31 of 96 (32%) of adults in southeastern Alberta and 27 of 3716 (0.85%) juveniles and 22 of 140 (16%) for adults in southwestern

Manitoba.¹ Ninety-five per cent of adults returned within 4.7 km of their previous nest site, with movements up to 29 km. Surprisingly, Loggerhead Shrike territories were more often re-occupied by new adults than by the previous year's occupants.

Note: Early Saskatchewan Loggerhead Shrike banders, who banded 123 shrikes, but had no recoveries, were: Atkinson, 1; Bard, 5; Baynton, 2; Blakeley, 5; Briggs, 7; JR Carter, 1; Gold, 4; Hammond, 6; Harper, 13; Lang, 20; Lloyd, 11; Myers, 10; Street, 18; Wotherspoon, 20. Twenty additional early banders banded no Loggerhead Shrikes.

Post-1955 banders, who banded 355 shrikes, without any recoveries, were: in Alberta, G. Booth, 3; G.R. Ebel, 33; R.E. Gehlert, 5; C.G. Hampson, 9; Edgar T. Jones, 64; JK Lowther, 2; AF Oeming, 2; E.Pletz, 9; D. Prescott, 39; J.D. Rising, 1; J.K. Schmutz, 69; H.E. Smith, 6; D.W.A. Whitfield, 1; in Saskatchewan, R.E. Gehlert, 9; B. Johns, 17; M.R. Lein, 5; B Matthews, 3; J.B. Millar, 5; S.G. Sealy, 10; A.R. Smith, 40; D.W.A. Whitfield, 19; in Manitoba: D.R.M. Hatch, 1.

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Distant recoveries of Loggerhead Shrikes banded on prairies

Through 1954	Number Banded data				Recovery data				Lat	Long				
	banded	Prov	Lat	Long	Month	Day	Year	How killed			Month	Day	Year	State
Fredeen	16	SK	523	1064	Aug	21	1938 *	Found dead	Dec	20	1938	Oklahoma	344	972
Hedlin	47	SK	513	1053	Jun	18	1938	Band only	May	6	1939	Sask	491	1012
Horning	n/a	AB	500	1130	Jun	25	1933	Shot	Dec	22	1933	Texas	311	973
Horning		AB	500	1130	Jul	16	1933	Shot	Oct	6	1934	Texas	304	972
Loewen	35	SK	523	1064	Jun	23	1938	Weather	Apr	8	1942	Texas	333	975
Matthews	35	SK	532	1040	Jun	27	1950	Found dead	Mar	24	1955	Sask	530	1050
Siemens	29	SK	523	1064	Jul	4	1931	Found dead	Sep	23	1931	Missouri	380	931
14 other banders	123	SK												
Total pre-1955	285													
After 1955														
Collister	1616	AB	505	1105	Jun	11	1992 *	Retrapped	Mar	5	1995	Texas	311	974
De Smet	4206	MB	491	1011	Jun	13	1990	Found dead	Aug	27	1991	Texas	331	981
De Smet		MB	493	1011	Jun	20	1990	Found dead	Jan	11	1991	Kansas	384	970
De Smet		MB	500	970	Jun	26	1992	Found dead	Aug	13	1992	Manitoba	495	970
De Smet		MB	491	1011	Jun	20	1994	Hit window	Jan	3	1995	Sask	491	1012
Harrissub	134	SK	512	1051	Jul	23	1972	Shot	Nov	22	1972	Texas	293	942
Harris	1666	SK	502	1061	Jun	22	1987	Caught by dog	Jan	8	1988	Texas	284	970
Harris		SK	492	1093	Jun	25	1988	Caught by dog	Jun	6	1993	Missouri	373	941
Harris		SK	494	1082	Jun	27	1988	Found dead	Jan	30	1989	Oklahoma	344	972
Harris		SK	512	1051	Jul	8	1990	Miscellaneous	Apr		1992	Texas	265	985
Harris		SK	512	1051	Jun	25	1991	Dead on hiway	Aug	8	1991	Sask	512	1051
Houston	138	SK	512	1060	Jul	21	1968	Found dead	Aug	21	1968	Sask	512	1061
20 other banders	355													
Total post-1955	8115													

* denotes adult banded; all others were flightless young

Number of Loggerhead Shrikes banded by that bander is given with first recovery