

SECOND RECOVERY OF A CALGARY AREA NESTBOX MONITORS SOCIETY (CANMS) BANDED MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD (MOBL) FROM THE WINTERING GROUNDS

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Background

Calgary Area Bluebird Trail Monitors (CABTM) officially began in 1980 with six active trails and 743 boxes, which fledged approximately 1,000 Mountain Bluebirds (*Sialia currucoides*) and 2,189 Tree Swallows (*Tachycineta bicolor*). This has gradually increased over the years to 71 trails and 5,143 boxes in 2020, which fledged 5,488 Mountain Bluebirds and 12,595 Tree Swallows. The name was changed in 2009 to Calgary Area Nestbox Monitors to acknowledge that Mountain Bluebirds did not occur on every trail. On 12 April 2018 the name was modified to Calgary Area Nestbox Monitors Society (CANMS) when the group became a Society.

Banding began in 1981 with Don Stiles as a sub-permittee of Cam Finlay. Don acquired his own permit (no. 10488) in 1985 with one sub-permittee, Ray Woods. Banding totals up to 2018 included 81,350 Mountain Bluebirds and 74,524 Tree Swallows. Because banders concentrated on Mountain Bluebirds, proportionally more bluebirds than Tree Swallows were banded. In 2019, the permit was changed to a Station Permit no. 10925 under the supervision of Bob Cooper, with 23 active sub-permittees. In 2019 and 2020, 4,836 Mountain Bluebirds and 5,247 Tree Swallows were banded under permit no. 10925. This gives a total banded up to 2020 of 86,186 Mountain Bluebirds and 79,771 Tree Swallows.

The second recovery

MOBL 2791-67014, banded as a young on 15 June 2020 by Susanne Maidment in a nestbox in ranching country 16.5 km or 10 mi south of Cochrane, AB, Lat-Long 51° 00'N, 114° 30'W.

Notes from the finder, Jim Hanson: I found a dead male bluebird in a driveway on 02 November 2020 in Pueblo West, CO, with no obvious marks on the body. A group of them had been feeding on the berries in my Juniper tree the last week or so. Band number and species were confirmed by photos. Finding location: Lat-Long 38° 10'N, 104° 40'W. It moved approximately 1,600 km or 1,000 mi from its banding location. The bird was likely already on its wintering grounds. This bird was recovered after the 2020 season with 86,186 Mountain Bluebirds banded up to that point. Two of 86,186 birds recovered gives a recovery rate of 0.00232%.

The first recovery

MOBL 961-61248 banded as a young by Ray Woods on 06 June 1986 near Elkton, AB, Lat-Long 51° 30'N, 114° 30'W. Found dead in a building about 50 miles north of Santa Fe, NM after 01 Jan 1987. Lat-Long: 36° 20'N, 105° 40'W, moved about 1830 km or 1135 mi.¹

This bird was recovered after the 1986 banding season. 1,417 Mountain Bluebirds had been banded up to that point.

The long time-span between the two recoveries indicates the extreme rarity in finding a banded bluebird on the wintering grounds, which is also indicated by the low recovery rate.

1. Stiles, DJ (1997). Recoveries of Mountain Bluebirds south of 49° latitude, and a recent Tree Swallow. *Blue Jay* 55(1):48-52, March 1997.

Note: The latitude and longitude values are given in the southeast corner of the appropriate 10' x 10' block. 🐦



Mountain Bluebird. Photo credit: Annie McLeod.