NEW LONGEVITY RECORD OF A GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Determining the maximum age attained by a wild bird requires an individual to be marked as a nestling, usually with a leg band, and subsequently recovered at the time of its death. When banded, it must be released to live a normal, wild, life in which it will encounter predators, adverse weather, starvation, and accidents (Welty 1975). Of the tens of millions of birds that have been banded in North America it is an extremely rare event to have a band return for a species over 30 years old.

On 21 July 1969, a Glaucous-winged Gull (Larus glaucescens) chick (Figure 1) was banded (#0807-31818) on Mitlenatch Island, British Columbia, under a master banding permit issued to the author. Mitlenatch Island is located near the northern end of the Strait of Georgia (49° 57’ 00” N, 125° 00’ 00” W) about 13 km east of Miracle Beach on Vancouver Island. It is a major seabird colony

On 20 September 2006, D. Dean found the banded gull dead among beach rocks about 100 m north of the northern boundary of Kitty Coleman Park. This 10 ha marine park is located about six kilometres northwest of Courtenay on Vancouver Island, BC and only 46 km from the gull’s natal colony. The chick was about 14 days old when banded so the calculated maximum age, including leap year days, is 37 years, 2 months, 11 days old.

Verbeek (1993) suggests that the Glaucous-winged Gull rarely lives beyond 15 years and at maturity Vermeer (1963) gives the species an average life expectancy of 9.5 years. Previous longevity records for the Glaucous-winged Gull in North America are 20 years 62 days (Campbell 1968), 21 years (Vermeer 1963), 24 years 9 months (Klimkiewicz 2007), 25 years 6 months (Campbell 1975), 29+ years (Wakefield 1987), and 32 years (Brown 1985).

According to longevity records of North American birds reported by Clapp et al. (1982, 1983), Klimkiewicz and Futcher (1987, 1989), and Klimkiewicz et al. (1983), the Glaucous-winged Gull from British Columbia is now the fourth longest surviving species. The top three are Laysan Albatross (*Phoebastria immutabilis*) at 50 years and eight months, Black-footed Albatross (*P. nigripes*) at 40 years and eight months, and Great Frigatebird (*Fregata minor*) at 38 years and 2 months old.

The other species in the top ten that have been recorded in British Columbia were Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) at 34 years old and Red-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon rubricauda*) at 32 years and eight months old.

**Literature Cited**


NOTEWORTHY BREEDING RECORDS OF THE NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL IN THE CRESTON VALLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

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The Northern Saw-whet Owl (Aegolius acadicus), primarily a nocturnal species, is an uncommon to fairly common local spring and autumn migrant and a rare to irregular resident across southern British Columbia (Cannings 1987 and 1993, Campbell et al. 1990). Butler et al. (1986) considered it to be rare in the Creston valley with seven records for the winter, spring, and summer periods and no nesting records. Although the Northern Saw-whet Owl has been found breeding in the West Kootenay (Campbell et al. 1990; Jakob Dulisse and Vanessa Johnson pers. comm.), nesting information is lacking for the Creston valley. In this note we describe two recent breeding occurrences.

On 16 April 2006, while driving a rural road in the Lister district on the east side of the Creston valley, Marcia Long spotted large woodpecker cavities in a trembling aspen (Populus tremuloides) snag. While her husband Tom prepared to “tap” the tree trunk, Marcia stood ready with her camera and was surprised when a Northern Saw-whet Owl peered out (Figure 1). The abdominal feathers of the owl appeared ruffled, suggesting incubation or brooding, and when subsequent visits repeated this response, it became evident that the cavity was being used for nesting.

The aspen snag was situated at the edge of a coniferous stand of trees, primarily Douglas-fir (Pseudotsuga menziesii) and western larch (Larix occidentalis) (Figure 2). The broken snag was 9.7 m (32 ft) in height and 48 cm (19 in) in diameter at breast height (dbh). There were seven cavities in the snag, of which two were found occupied; one by the Northern Saw-whet Owl 7 m (23 ft) from the ground, and another by a Northern Flicker (Colaptes auratus) 7.3 m (24 ft) from the ground.

On 12 May 2006, Marcia observed one well-