1964

WATERFOWL DRIVE-TRAP BANDING

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INTRODUCTION

During a 3-week period in July of 1964, Game Section personnel with assistance from Biology Section and Conservation Officer personnel carried out drive-trap waterfowl banding operations on marsh areas in the northern part of Iowa. This was the fourth year that drive-trap banding operations have been carried out in the state. Several days prior to the actual banding operations were spent selecting areas to band. Areas were selected that had a good population of local birds and vegetative cover suitable for banding. Young birds can be extremely difficult to drive on heavily vegetated marshes of emergent vegetation, and marshes lacking emergent vegetation seldom produce very many young birds.

METHODS

In drive-trapping, an enclosed trap with a narrow entrance was set in shallow water or on land, and two leads from a few yards to 50 yards or more long were extended from the trap. The marsh was then surrounded by drivers, and the young ducks and molting adults were driven into the trap and banded.

The bands used were furnished by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A form furnished with the bands were used to record the species, location, date, age, sex, and band number of the waterfowl banded. This information is then sent to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland, where it is recorded for future use.

RESULTS

A total of 1,822 birds were banded this year on 27 different areas (Table 1). Blue-winged teal again showed good production in Iowa this year, as 1,196 of the birds banded were teal. The number of wood duck banded in the prairie pothole region of Iowa increased from 89 banded in 1963 to 197 banded this year. The number of mallards dropped from 216 last year to 99 banded this year. Numbers of other birds banded remained about the same as previous years.

Of the total 1,553 ducks banded, 63 per cent of them were "Locals" (Table 2)*. This year more adult shore birds and coot were banded than young (Table 2). The production of young coot was down this year again, and was lower than in any previous year.

The ratio of young to adult female was up for blue-winged teal and wood duck, but was down for coot and mallard (Table 3). This production figure, while not indicative of the whole production of an area, does indicate that the production of wood duck and

TABLE 1. Total birds banded during waterfowl drive-trapping operations - 1964, by species and area

County	Area	Gr.W. Teal	Bl.W. Teal	Mallard	Wood Duck	Shoveler	Pin-tail	Ring-necked	Lesser Scaup	Ruddy Duck	Red-head	Coot	Misc.* Water-fowl	Total
Clay	Dan Green Slough	2	81	13	8					3	2	12	1	122
Clay	Mud Lake	2	280	9								116		407
Cerro Gordo	Ventura Marsh		28	4	20							5		57
Dickinson	Lily Lake	1	217	15	1		12	1		2			1	250
Dickinson	Jemmerson Slough		12		2	7					5			26
Dickinson	Grover's Lake		18									2		20
Dickinson	Christopherson Sl.		138	7	37								6	188
Dickinson	Center Lake		25		21									46
Emmet	West Swan Lake	2	77	10	14						2	33	9	147
Emmet	Ingham Lake		2		4				1		4			11
Emmet	Iowa Lake		19	8	30									57
Emmet	Cunningham Sl.		8		7		5					4	5	29
Greene	Goose Lake		10	3	1							10	4	28
Hancock	East Twin Lake		3	1							1	2		7
Hancock	West Twin Lake		26		19						1	1		47
Jackson	Green Island				18							2		20
Kossuth	Pothole			9								1		10
Osceola	Rush Lake		15				2						14	31
Palo Alto	Silver Lake		47		2									49
Palo Alto	Virgin Lake		14	1										15
Pocahontas	Lizzard Creek		18											18
Winnebago	Carlson Pond		19	1	6	4							2	32
Winnebago	Harmon Lake		74	15	1					1		31		129
Winnebago	Leland Pond		15		6									21
Worth	Elk Creek		25	1			1							27
Worth	Silver Lake		24	1										25
Wright	Morse Lake		1	1										2
TOTALS		7	1,196	99	197	11	20	1	1	6	15	219	49	1,821

TABLE 2. Age and sex by species of birds banded - 1964

Waterfowl Species	Local		Adult		Local	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
B. W. Teal	370	340	382	102	2	1,196
G. W. Teal	0	0	5	2	0	7
Mallard	34	27	20	17	1	99
Wood Duck	59	78	44	16	0	197
Redhead	6	5	1	3	0	15
Lesser Scaup	0	0	0	1	0	1
Pintail	12	4	1	3	0	20
Ruddy Duck	1	4	0	1	0	6
Shoveler	4	7	0	0	0	11
Ring-necked Duck	0	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	486	465	453	146	3	1,553

Other Species	Local	Adult	Total
Coot	101	118	219
Common Gallinule	1	6	7
Pied-billed Grebe	8	13	21
Killdeer	1	0	1
Sora Rail	2	5	7
Virginia Rail	6	8	14
TOTAL	119	150	269

TABLE 3. Ratio of young to adult female by species - 1964

Species	No. of Young	No. of Adult Female	Young per Adult Female
B. W. Teal	712	102	6.1
Mallard	72	17	3.6
Wood Duck	137	16	8.6
Coot	101 young	118 adult	0.8 young per adult

blue-winged teal was very good this year, but that production of mallard and coot was markedly lower.

Blue-winged teal were produced on practically all of the areas on which banding was done, but the production of mallard, wood duck, and coot was not as widespread (Table I). On some of the areas, the take of adult males was quite high. These were usually areas with dense stands of emergent vegetation, and the adult males come to such areas to molt after the breeding season. On Mud Lake, for instance, 205 of the 280 blue-winged teal banded were adult males.

There were ten previously banded blue-winged teal recaptured during banding operations this summer (Table 4). These recaptures help to substantiate the idea that birds have the tendency to return to the same general area year after year.

The production of young males was higher than young females in all species except wood duck this year. This can be expected, as in waterfowl more young males will usually be produced than females.

DISCUSSION

The drive-trap banding operations carried on this summer were very successful and should be carried on in coming years. The production of blue-winged teal was very good this summer. The production of wood duck in the prairie pothole region this summer was up considerably and might be an indication that more wood duck nesting may be centering in this part of the state. Coot production was markedly down from previous years. An extremely windy spring during the nesting season might be a factor in this low production, as nest destruction seemed unusually high.

The lower number banded this year of other species indicates that production was lower for these species. However, this may not be the actual case as these other species are as a rule much harder to drive-trap than blue-winged teal, wood duck, or coot, and figures from these may not be as comparable on a year to year basis.

The recapturing of previously banded birds was very encouraging, as it helps substantiate the idea that birds have a tendency to return to the same general area year after year.

The number of shore birds banded this year was larger than in previous years. This population should be watched closely as some of these birds may be a harvestable resource in coming years.

* In reporting banding data, the term "local" refers to young birds banded on the area where they were hatched.

TABLE 4. Birds recaptured during 1964 waterfowl banding operations

Species	Area Banded	Age	Sex	Year Banded	Area Recaptured
B. W. Teal	Dan Greene Slough	L	M	1963	Dan Greene Slough
B. W. Teal	Dan Greene Slough	A	F	1963	Dan Greene Slough
B. W. Teal	Dan Greene Slough	A	M	1963	Dan Greene Slough
B. W. Teal	Jemmerson Slough	A	F	1963	Jemmerson Slough
B. W. Teal	Goose Lake (Kossuth)	L	F	1962	West Twin Lake
B. W. Teal	Goose Lake (Kossuth)	L	M	1962	West Twin Lake
B. W. Teal	Ventura Marsh	A	M	1963	Ventura Marsh
B. W. Teal	Harmon Lake	L	F	1963	Harmon Lake
B. W. Teal	Harmon Lake	A	F	1963	Harmon Lake
B. W. Teal	Goose Lake (Greene)	L	F	1962	West Swan Lake