

Information on Banded Raptors Wanted



USGS Banded Osprey Photo by: DeeDee Gollwitzer



Color Banded and USGS Banded Red-shouldered Hawk Photo by; Trude Hurd

We need your help locating banded raptors (hawks, osprey, kites, eagles and owls) in Orange County

You can help by providing the following information:

1. Your name, address, phone number and E-mail address
2. The date and specific location of the sighting
3. The species of hawk, if possible
4. Which leg is banded and with what type the band(s) are (see pictures above – USGS Band and VID (Color Band))
5. The color of the Color Band (VID) Band and its letters and/or numbers, as well as any marks before the letter(s) or number(s)
6. The location and proximity to any known hawk nests
7. Any information about behaviors observed, such as perched, foraging, with another hawk, courtship, nest building, territorial behavior and/or repeated vocalizations

If you observe banded raptors, we ask that you report your observations with as much of the information listed above in two ways:

1. Send your information to:

Pete Bloom at petebloom@bloombiological.com and/or

Scott Thomas at redtail1@cox.net

- **2. Report the observation to the USGS Banding Laboratory at:**
<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/BBL/bblretrv/>

Local Raptor Banding Research Projects

Sea & Sage's members Pete Bloom PhD and Scott Thomas have been studying and subsequently banding hundreds of raptors in Southern California for decades, with a focus on red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks, but also including all species of raptors found in southern California. Pete Bloom is a world renown raptor biologist and long-time Sea and Sage Audubon member and leader who has published many important papers on southern California's raptors. Scott Thomas Chairs Sea and Sage's Raptor Research Committee.

Banding (marking) raptors and other birds allows researchers to gather important data on dispersal, nesting success, philopatry (the tendency of a particular animal to breed close to where it was born) and life expectancy.

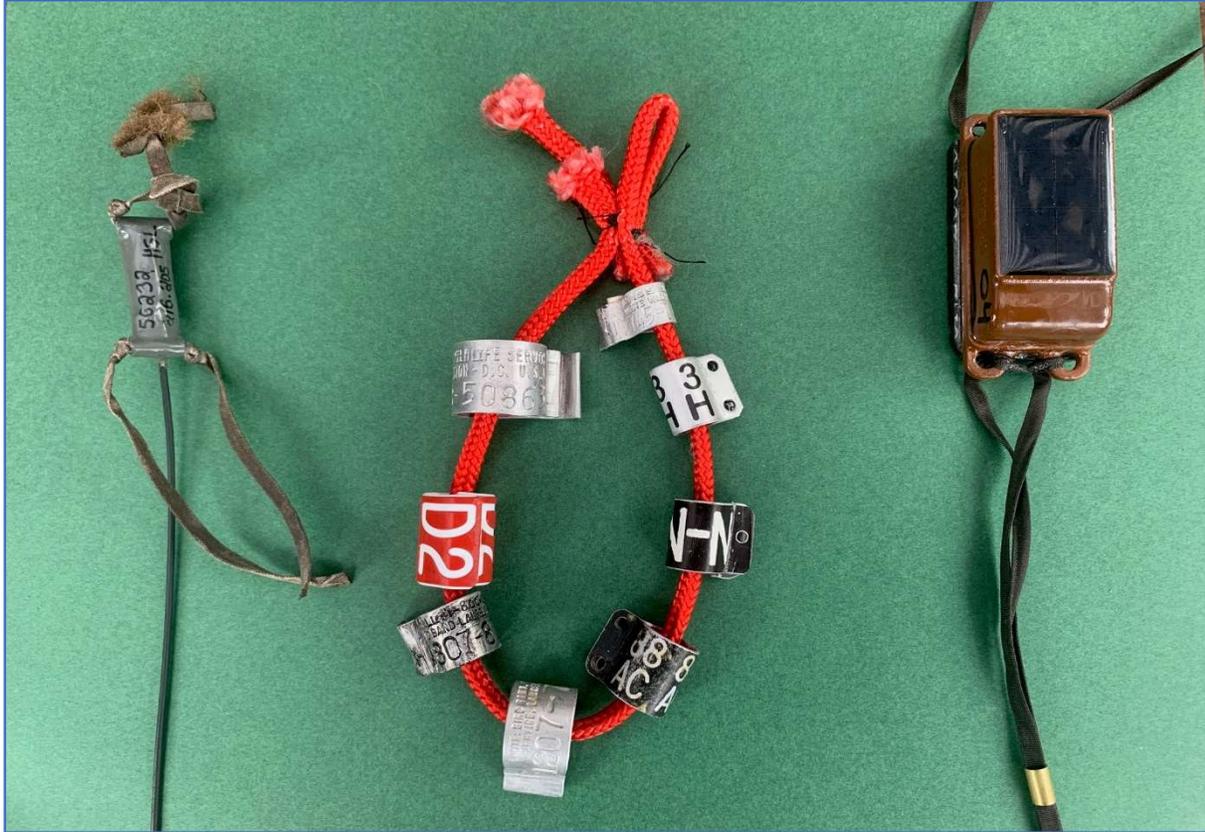
Many raptors are originally banded with a single aluminum USGS Band fitted on the right leg (see the Osprey photo above). Others, particularly older and local birds, are more often banded with 2 bands, a silver USGS Band on one leg and a unique Color Band (Visual Identification Band), (VID) on the opposite leg (as with the red-shouldered hawk in the picture above).

Resighting these raptors and recording the band information critically important to Pete's "Mark and Recapture" studies of raptors. The color bands for observations and study of these birds without the stress of recapturing them. Gathering data in this fashion vastly increases the understanding of raptors, contributing to their conservation.

Pete uses other tracking methods, including the deployment of radio and satellite tracking transmitters on raptors. Pete and his associates gather information through telemetry and focused monitoring of banded raptors. The public also contributes a good deal of valuable information to Pete's information data base by reporting banded raptors. Public re-sightings of banded (marked) hawks, owl, kites, vultures, eagles and ospreys greatly increases the understanding of raptor ecology. The success of the local studies are enhanced by contributions from Sea and Sage Audubon members.

We need your continued help in order to locate and record further observations of banded raptors in urban areas, parks and our open spaces in Southern California.

More about Banding and Marking Raptors



Radio Transmitter, USGS Bands (silver aluminum), Color Bands, Satellite/Cellular Transmitter

Most of the marked raptors fall into two “banding categories”:

Category 1: Birds that were banded as nestlings. These will usually have one aluminum USGS band which is silver in color and will most likely be on the right leg. Most of these birds were born in nests somewhere in Southern California and banded as chicks. We need to attempt to recapture them in order to identify them.

Category 2: Birds that have 2 bands, one of each leg. These birds will have an aluminum USGS band on either the right or left leg. The other leg will have a “color band” made of either metal or plastic. These “color bands” may have either a number or letter, or both, that is large enough to read with an average spotting scope or a very good pair of binoculars.

Special Circumstances:

When we band resident adult hawks, we often put the bands on in a

specific arrangement in order to more easily distinguish the male from the female. Example: On females, we often put the aluminum band on the left leg with the color band on the right.

Bands:

The aluminum bands (silver) are issued to researchers by the United States Geological Service (USGS). They typically have a two-part numeric code separated by a hyphen and are issued only once, which will identify the bird both to the USGS and to us. The VID color bands are purchased by the bander for the banders use only. They are usually installed only on local raptors that have a high chance of being resighted. These color bands will have some sort of highly visible alpha/numeric codes. Example: a red + P + on the left leg of a Red-shouldered Hawk.

Send all reports of banded raptors to Pete Bloom and/or Scott Thomas and to the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory at: <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/>

Transmitters/Telemetry:

Raptor researchers utilize radio and satellite transmitters to track raptors locally in their home ranges and long-distance during migrations. Early transmitters used radio signal that were tracked by biologists with handheld receivers. This technology worked quite well for short-distance home range studies, but satellite transmitters using accurate GPS technology and even cellular technology can track birds locally and over very long-distances making them the preferred choice for modern studies.