

Date: 4 April, 1995
To: Rick Roy, Scott Lutz
From: Bruce Vander Lee
Subject: Monthly Report for March 1995

Personnel/Equipment

Leslie Hawkins continues to do excellent work as my field technician. The pickup has been running well but getting poor gas mileage. I plan to have it adjusted early in April.

Trapping

Trapping in March was conducted using Tomahawk live traps and walkin funnel traps (Table 1) with sweet mix as bait. We had 148 total captures on 101 birds. We concentrated our activity in the core and adjacent areas, but also trapped in several non-core areas. Trapping seemed most efficient when the weather was cold or wet. We have attempted to take blood from most new captures. It took several weeks of practice before we became proficient. When successful, we generally collect approximately 1.3-1.5 cc from the wing. We have been aging birds based on plumage characteristics (appearance of 9th and 10th primaries) and estimating sex using Kadlec and Reese's (1988) formula (Table 2).

We recaptured 17 birds 38 times. We also collected visual relocations on 12 birds. Seeing bands on birds is easy, but we have had a difficult time reading the VID label. We have observed numerous banded birds working on nests, but in many cases have been unable to exactly identify the bird. As nests are initiated, I believe we will be able to more easily identify these birds.

Nest Monitoring

We monitored nest building activities during March. Most nests appear to be near completion, but we have not found any nests with eggs. During the last spell of cold weather, we observed both members of most pairs outside the nest, which leads me to believe very few nests were initiated in March. Based on a nest survey we started at the end of the month, I expect app. 15-20 active nests in the core area. Most are south of South Plants, but I recently found 2 (possibly 3) nests in or near former Basin E. We also have several nests around the North Plants perimeter.

Telemetry

I did not place any transmitters in March. I currently only have 8 transmitters for use. I plan to place these on males of pairs nesting in or adjacent to the core area.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Officer has informed me that he would like some changes made to the Health and Safety Plan (H&SP) that I submitted. The H&SP I gave him was

identical to the Plan prepared for the GHO study. At his request, I am currently making changes to the H&SP so that it is specific to the BBM project.

Future Goals

We will continue to trap in April. However, we will focus more on nest monitoring, sample collection, and telemetry. My goal is to monitor all active nests in the core area and several nest groups in non-core areas. I have also received my Federal and State collection permits and will start with egg sample collections.

Table 1. Trapping effort and capture rates for two trap types during March 1995.

Trap Type	Trap Hours	Total Captures	Captures/Hour
Tomahawk	4310.16	116	0.027
Walkin	199.41	22	0.110

Table 2. Age and Sex of magpies captured during March 1995.

Age	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
Adult	30	36	66
Juvenile	4	23	27
Total	34	59	93