

Algoma University Animal Care Committee	
#AU 0004 Banding Birds	
Issue date: August 2010	Last revised: March/2025

1. Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) describes acceptable procedures for banding birds.

2. Policy

CCAC guidelines and regulations

3. Responsibility

Principal investigator, their research staff, and their student investigators

4. Training Required

Animal Research Ethics

Handling/training in the relevant species

Bio-methodology training in the relevant technique and species

5. Materials Required

Darvic, celluloid, or acetal coloured leg bands

Aluminum Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) Band

Banding pliers (CWS band)

Band Applicator (Coloured leg bands)

Leg Gauge

6. Procedures

1. The bird will be held in the bander's grip: non-dominant hand, with the bird facing up, the head of the bird secured between the first and second fingers, and the body secured with the last 2 fingers. The leg to be banded is held extended and supported using the thumb and first finger (see figure 2).

2. The CWS band is opened with the banding pliers and secured around the leg. Care is taken to make sure that the band is completely closed and that there is no overlap.

3. One to three coloured bands (2 bands total per leg maximum incl CWS) are then applied using the band applicator which acts like a shoe horn; the band is opened and then the leg is inserted and the applicator is removed.

4. For birds with very small legs, the coloured band may be cut to decrease the circumference and then the band ends may be soldered in place.



Figure 1: Black-capped chickadee being banded



Figure 2: Nestling black-capped chickadee being banded

7. References (if applicable)

REVISION HISTORY		
Revision #	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
1	April 2011	
2	October 2018	
3	September 2022	
4	July 2024	Reformatted to new SOP template