

2019 Idaho Hummingbird Banding Summary

I banded hummingbirds in Idaho from early May through the middle of August this summer. I had 32 banding sessions at 15 different locations and banded 1,443 hummingbirds. That total included 794 Calliopes, 508 Black-chinned, 107 Broad-tailed, 32 Rufous, 1 Anna's, and 1 Black-chinned/Broad-tailed hybrid.

I recaptured 158 hummingbirds I previously banded in Idaho. That is almost an 11% return rate which is excellent when banding a mixture of nesting and migrating birds. Those returns included 105 banded in 2018, 25 banded in 2016, 13 banded in 2015, 9 banded in 2014, 5 banded in 2013, and one amazing return from 2008. I did not band in Idaho in 2017.

The return from 2008 was a female Black-chinned I banded as an adult in June 2008 near Inkom at the home of Cathy and Jeff Oesterling. I recaptured that bird in 2014 and 2017 and in July this summer. That means the bird was at least 12 years and 1 month old at the time of recapture. It is the second oldest hummingbird ever documented and was only one month short of the record of 12 years and 2 months.

I also had several foreign recaptures this summer. When I banded at Melly and Fred Ziellemaker's home north of Ola May 18, I found out about a very interesting recapture. Cindy Durham, who records banding data there for me, showed me a card with a band number. The previous day she found a Black-chinned hummingbird with its bill caught in a screen at her home. She removed the bird from the screen and noticed it was wearing a band. She read and recorded the number which is difficult to do. That bird was banded in August 2018 near Bisbee, AZ.

June 12 at Kathy and Jeff Oesterling's home, I recaptured a male Broad-tailed banded July 2018 near Cortez, CO. August 8 in Boise at Judy and Bill Collins' home, I recaptured a female Black-chinned banded earlier in the summer near Idaho City north of Boise. And August 12 I got word that a female Black-chinned I banded at Melly and Fred Zeillemaker's home in August 2018 was recaptured near Escalante, UT in August 2019.

I have spent the summer in Idaho since 2003 and love living there and studying hummingbirds more each summer. None of my research there would be possible without the wonderful hummer hosts who share their birds with me by allowing me to band at their homes. I'm already looking forward to seeing friends and learning new things about hummingbirds again next summer.