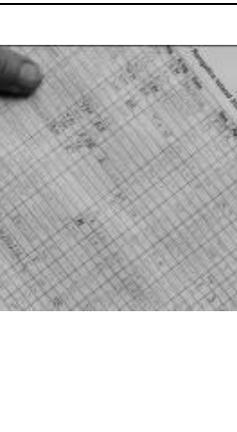


Banding Birds

PowerPoint information Sheet

Photograph	Information
	<p>Many of the birds on Rangatira Island are very rare. The scientists need to be able to count the number of birds (for e.g. the black robins), each year, so that they know whether the number of birds has increased or decreased. Counting birds is not easy as they can all look alike! To ensure that the same bird is not counted twice each bird is banded with a unique combination of bands. Each bird that is caught has a metal band and three plastic coloured bands placed around its legs a bit like bracelets. The banding allows the scientists to be able to tell which bird is which and to collect information about the birds over time.</p>
	<p>The scientists catch the birds in big nets (called mist nets) strung between two poles. They clip the bands around the bird's legs and push the ends together with pliers so that the bands do not fall off. The bands do not hurt the birds. At the same time the scientists record which colour bands the bird has on each leg.</p>
	<p>The songbird's metal bands are made out of a light aluminium which disintegrates in seawater. Seabirds are banded with just one stainless steel band which doesn't disintegrate in seawater. This is a Antipodean Wandering Albatross being banded.</p>

			<p>The Wandering Albatross is one of the largest birds in the world and has to have a large band attached to its leg. It can be quite hard to attach the metal band to these birds!</p>
			<p>Scientists band young birds just before they leave their nests. Scientists use the bands to work out what birds have survived from one year to the next and also work out how old birds can get.</p>
			<p>This Black Robin has bands on both legs. The bands help scientists monitor birds from year to year. When Scientists catch birds they measure wing length, tarsus length (the lower part of the bird's leg) and they weigh the bird and look at how healthy it is.</p>
			<p>Here is another black robin that has been banded. The bird has bands on both legs so that there are more combinations that each bird can wear. And so more birds can be identified.</p>
			<p>All the information about each bird and the bands that they have been given, is recorded in a datasheet. No two birds of the same species have the same combination of bands on their legs.</p> <p>As most of the black robin population has been banded, scientists are able to tell how many new young birds have been born by seeing how many birds require banding when they reach Rangatira Island each year.</p>