

Prothonotary Warbler Project

Calvert County Natural Resources

About this project

The Prothonotary Warbler is a small songbird that can be found along forested streams and in swamps. Easily identifiable by its unique bright yellow color or its loud high pitched “sweet sweet sweet” song. We began the nest box program for these birds at Battle Creek in 2014. After breeding in our area, they will migrate to Central and South America for the winter. In 2020 we began banding adults and nestlings to be able to learn which birds are returning to this site year after year. To help gather more data and to allow more people to help with this project we began adding color bands to our captured birds. This allows staff, volunteers and visitors to be able to identify individual birds just using their binoculars!



Photo by Rick Smith

Notice this bird has a Red color band on its left leg. You can just see the aluminum band on its right leg.

Using the data, we collect from the resighting of color banded birds we will have a better understanding of their territory size, lifespans, breeding activity, and nest site fidelity. We need citizen scientists (like you) to report any banded birds that they see. Please follow the instructions on the next page to contribute to this invaluable research while visiting Battle Creek Cypress Swamp.

Collecting Data

To fill out this form on your mobile device you will need to install a pdf viewer app such as Adobe or Foxit PDF editor

Each Prothonotary Warbler (PROW) that we capture at Battle Creek is fitted with a unique combination of bands on its legs. Every bird receives a silver aluminum band on its lower right leg; this band has a tiny number on it that corresponds to a national database. The other bands seen on our banded PROWs are plastic color bands that are unique to each individual bird.

In order to help us learn about these birds, **please begin by filling out the participant information in the section below. Then, as you walk the boardwalk and notice banded birds, fill out the following pages with the information requested. Please email data sheets to gene.groshon@calvertcountymd.gov**

Reminders:

* If you spot a banded bird, try to see the band colors and their arrangement on the bird. Remember if a bird is facing you, it's right leg will be on your left side. If you can't see or can't remember the arrangement that's okay! Still write down your observations and make a note of this in the comment area provided.

* The color bands that we've uses are: **Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue White, Black, Light Brown and Gray.**

* There are yellow numbered signs every 30 feet along the boardwalk. Use the number on the sign to let us know where you saw each banded bird.



Photo by Steve Arthur

The bird above has 2 color bands on its left leg, Red on top and Yellow on the bottom.



- When you finish your trip around the boardwalk and have internet service please email your data sheet to gene.groshon@calvertcountymd.gov Even if you only saw one banded bird, that information is still very helpful to us! If you would prefer to mail a printed copy, please send to the address listed below. When mailing in please right your name and email on top of each page.

Special thanks to **Matthew Johnson** of **Audubon Center at Francis Beidler Forest** for helping me with getting a color banding project started here at Battle Creek.

If you have additional questions about the project, please feel free to reach out.

Project manager:

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CALVERT NATURE SOCIETY
WWW.CALVERTPARKS.ORG



Participant Information

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Number of Participants in Group:

Name:

Email:

Sighting #1

Approx. Time:

Color of band on lower right leg: Aluminum

Color of band on upper right leg:

Color of band on lower left leg:

Color of band on upper left leg:

Number on nearest yellow sign:

Behaviors Observed (check all that apply):

- ☐ Feeding ☐ Preening ☐ Singing ☐ Calling
- ☐ Carrying nesting material ☐ Feeding Young
- ☐ Entering a nest box

Comments:

Sighting #2

Approx. Time:

Color of band on lower right leg: Aluminum

Color of band on upper right leg:

Color of band on lower left leg:

Color of band on upper left leg:

Number on nearest yellow sign:

Behaviors Observed (check all that apply):

- ☐ Feeding ☐ Preening ☐ Singing ☐ Calling
- ☐ Carrying nesting material ☐ Feeding Young
- ☐ Entering a nest box

Comments:

Sighting #3

Approx. Time:

Color of band on lower right leg: Aluminum

Color of band on upper right leg:

Color of band on lower left leg:

Color of band on upper left leg:

Number on nearest yellow sign:

Behaviors Observed (check all that apply):

- ☐ Feeding ☐ Preening ☐ Singing ☐ Calling
- ☐ Carrying nesting material ☐ Feeding Young
- ☐ Entering a nest box

Comments:

Sighting #4

Approx. Time:

Color of band on lower right leg: Aluminum

Color of band on upper right leg:

Color of band on lower left leg:

Color of band on upper left leg:

Number on nearest yellow sign:

Behaviors Observed (check all that apply):

- ☐ Feeding ☐ Preening ☐ Singing ☐ Calling
- ☐ Carrying nesting material ☐ Feeding Young
- ☐ Entering a nest box

Comments:

Sighting #5

Approx. Time:

Color of band on lower right leg: Aluminum

Color of band on upper right leg:

Color of band on lower left leg:

Color of band on upper left leg:

Number on nearest yellow sign:

Behaviors Observed (check all that apply):

- ☐ Feeding ☐ Preening ☐ Singing ☐ Calling
- ☐ Carrying nesting material ☐ Feeding Young
- ☐ Entering a nest box

Comments:

Sighting #6

Approx. Time:

Color of band on lower right leg: Aluminum

Color of band on upper right leg:

Color of band on lower left leg:

Color of band on upper left leg:

Number on nearest yellow sign:

Behaviors Observed (check all that apply):

- ☐ Feeding ☐ Preening ☐ Singing ☐ Calling
- ☐ Carrying nesting material ☐ Feeding Young
- ☐ Entering a nest box

Comments: