

PROGRAM ACTIVITY REPORT (PAR)



DISEASE MONITORING INCREASES ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

One of the many values of the NWDP is that monitoring and surveillance work provides for the opportunity to add to the ecological knowledge base of a variety of animals. For example, little is known about the birdlife in northern Greenland. As part of the interagency effort to increase preparedness for highly pathogenic avian influenza, the NWDP collaborated with Denmark and Greenland on several projects that improved understanding of the role wild birds played in the ecology of the virus.

In one of these projects, the NWDP sampled geese in northwest Greenland. Last week we received notice from the Danish Museum of Natural History that another of the Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) banded in

Greenland in 2008 was collected on the runway at Thule Airbase. The band recovery is the first in 4 years. Twenty-four Canada Geese were trapped during the molt and subsequently banded in the summer of 2008. Five were taken by hunters in the first year in the US and Canada, but none since.

While scouting populations of geese that could be surveyed in the area, Wildlife Services biologists made observations on the abundance and distribution of a variety of birds in the region. Two biologists with the NWDP are co-authors of a manuscript “New species records and changes in population status for waterfowl in northwest Greenland,” recently submitted to *Polar Biology*.

Northwest Greenland is remote and difficult to access, and many of the observations of birds had not been up-

dated for twenty years or more. Over 300 Canada Geese and Snow Geese (*Chen caerulescens*) were trapped, swabbed for influenza, and measured. Some of these data contributed to another paper published



last year, “The status of Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* subspecies in Greenland.”

For more information see:

[Fox A.D., Sinnett D., Baroch J.A., Stroud D.A., Kampp K., Egevang C., Boertmann D. 2012. The status of Canada Goose \(*Branta Canadensis*\) subspecies in Greenland. Dansk Orn. Foren. Tidsskr. 106:87-92.](#)

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