

HOME RANGE OF BREEDING COMMON RAVENS ON CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA: RESEARCH AND APPLICATION. Linz, G. M., Denver Wildlife Research Center, North Dakota Field Station, North Dakota State University, Fargo. C. E. Knittle and R. E. Johnson, Denver Wildlife Research Center, Denver, CO.

The common raven has been identified as an avian predator on the eggs of California least terns nesting on Camp Pendleton. During May and June 1989, we radio-tagged 21 ravens within 6.5 km of the Aliso Creek least tern colony and fitted them with radio transmitters to determine if their home ranges overlapped the tern colony. Home ranges of 13 nesting adults and 5 non-nesting adults were estimated using the 95% harmonic-mean activity, minimum convex polygon, and 95% ellipse calculation methods. Nesting males and females did not differ in size of home ranges (median = 1.20 km², P=0.252). Home ranges of 2 pairs of ravens, nesting within 1.5 km of the colony, overlapped the colony. Median home range of the non-nesting ravens was 8.2 km² and none overlapped the tern colony. We observed the tern colony over 43 days and found that ravens approached within 250 m of the colony on 50 occasions. None of the ravens were observed landing in the colony. All of the observations were attributed to 2 pairs of ravens nesting within 1.5 km of the colony. No other ravens were seen in the vicinity of the tern colony suggesting that these birds may have been defending the tern colony as part of their territory. If this is true, teaching territorial ravens not to eat eggs through behavioral modifications (e.g. taste aversion) may be a viable method of protecting the colony.