



Owl Bands

Scientists use bird banding to study wild birds. The birds are captured and marked with a uniquely numbered band or ring placed on the bird’s leg. Then they are released. The bander records where and when each bird is banded, how old it is, what sex it is, and any other information and sends those data to the Bird Banding Laboratory. When birds are found again, scientists can learn about their movements, their numbers, their life span, and other information.

What you need:

- strips of construction paper 1"x 9" in assorted colors
- markers, colored pencils, or crayons

What you do ahead of time:

- Hold the strip horizontal. Measure ¼ inch from the edge of one end.
- Cut ½ inch slit along the top side.
- On the opposite end cut ½ inch slit from the bottom side.



What you do:

- Decorate the band by writing your name using the Caesar Cipher code.
- Wrap around your wrist and insert the slit edges to keep bracelet on.

Caesar Cipher Code:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
 s t u v w x y z a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r

Fun Facts:

- Henry IV was the first recorded person to attach a metal band to a bird’s leg in 1595. He banded a Peregrine Falcon in France and it showed up in Malta 1350 miles away. He learned that the bird flew an average of 56 miles per hour.
- Bird banding is called “ringing” in Europe.
- John James Audubon was the first to band in North America, in 1803.
- In 1909 the American Bird Banding Association was founded.

Visit the Bird Banding Laboratory site: www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/ for more information.